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THE JOURNAL OF AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP

POLICY REVIEW

Published by
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July • August 1997

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—Ronald Reagan
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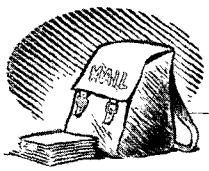

Correspondence

Seven Deadly Sins

To the Editor:

In response to Joe Loconte's "The Seven Deadly Sins of Government Funding for Private Charities" (March-April 1997):

Catholic Charities has a clear mission from the church: we aim to support families, reduce poverty, and build communities. We act as Jesus taught us, caring for every human being in need, regardless of religion, racial or ethnic group, and economic status.

Besides myriad social services, Catholic Charities agencies, using Church funding, offer spiritual aid and moral guidance to those who seek it. However, the poor are not poor because they lack faith; they're poor because they lack jobs, education, health care, child care, and other resources. American Catholics understand our mission and respond generously with their private donations and time.

Local, independent Catholic Charities agencies across the country make use of government contracts that advance their mission. Despite problems that make for good press, government regulation is not always, or even mostly, stupid and wasteful. Taxpayers have a right to be assured their money is spent as lawmakers intend, and we agree that accountability is appropriate.

And those contracts are not all that "lucrative." When they choose to form partnerships with government, Catholic Charities agencies add considerable donated money and volunteer hours to the effort. They have nearly five volunteers for every paid staffer.

Catholic Charities workers face far worse sins than government inefficiency or cumbersome regulations. The deadly sins Catholic Charities tirelessly works to overcome include newborn babies living in homeless shelters, children going hungry, and women being abused, to name just a few.

Rev. Fred Kammer, SJ
President, Catholic Charities USA
Alexandria, Va.

Funding the Arts

To the Editor:

In his essay about funding for artists ("I Hear America Singing" March-April 1997), William Craig Rice, relying in part on some deeply flawed observations of Martin Morse Wooster, offers an astonishingly false impression of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation's activities. He states that in the early days of the Foundation, under the leadership of Henry Allen Moe, fellowships went not only to scholars and scientists but also to promising writers, such as John Updike and John Cheever, "who had not yet established themselves," whereas during the presidencies of Gordon Ray and myself the Foundation has only "intermittently helped highly gifted but needy or obscure applicants."

Nothing, as anyone with even the most casual knowledge of the Foundation is aware, could be further from the truth. Included in the list of 1997 Fellows, for example, are seven novelists, six poets, four nonfiction writers, two playwrights, and other "highly gifted" writers, few if any of whom have already "won their fame." Moreover, the list includes a large number of composers, painters, sculptors, photographers, choreographers, filmmakers, and other artists who, almost without exception, are either needy or obscure or both, and for whom the award is not merely "one more credential," to borrow Wooster's unfortunate phrase.

Limiting myself to fiction—since Rice invokes, as examples of enlightened choices, Updike and Cheever, who received fellowships in 1959 and 1951—I offer the following as a representative sampling of the literally hundreds of previously "obscure" writers who during the past 20 years gained awards before they achieved wide recognition: Margaret Atwood, Russell Banks, Ann Beattie, Robert Olen Butler, Michael Cunningham, Don DeLillo, Andre Dubus, Louise Erdich, Richard Ford, Barry Hannah, Oscar Hijuelos, John Irving, Charles Johnson, Jamaica Kincaid, Brad Leithauser, Bobbie Ann Mason, Sue Miller, Lorrie Moore, Dale Peck, Norman Rush, Carolyn See, and Tobias Wolff. The complete list is very long indeed, as are those for poets, nonfiction writers, biographers, and playwrights, not to mention painters, photographers, choreographers, etcetera.

The Guggenheim Foundation, though it does indeed support productive scholars and scientists, takes pains to identify and reward large numbers of other worthy applicants, including writers, many of whom go on later to win Whiting Writers' Awards, Pulitzer Prizes, National Book Awards, and, in a great many cases, MacArthur Fellowships. Had Rice (and Wooster) done even a modest bit of research they would have spared your readers observations that are wildly off the mark.

Joel Conarroe
President, John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation
New York, N.Y.

To the Editor:

William Craig Rice's article was as refreshing as it was straightforward, unideological, and nonpartisan. With its litany of quite successful alternatives to federal funding that are already in use, his analysis reveals that the debate over the NEA consists of much more than just the "facts" about funding, but is derived from what Thomas Sowell has called the "vision of the anointed."

Rice's article challenges the arts community, which equates "support for the arts" with federal funding, to compete with the rest of society through market processes. But arts communities want no part of competition because it requires them to acknowledge standards and criteria that exist outside of their own making and control.

Rice reveals that the battle between the arts communities and larger society is not fiscal, it is rhetorical and ideological. In fact, it is the arts communities, not the evil conservatives on Capitol Hill or the far Right in fly-over

Letters to the Editor

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country, who relish—nay, even require—these debates, because it is around them that they can trot out the tired ideological distinctions between the "anointed" and the "benighted" that have driven 20th-century liberalism. A question that Rice's article thus raises for me: Is liberalism necessary for the survival of the arts?

Daniel A. Siedell
Curator, Sheldon Memorial
Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden
Lincoln, Neb.

To the Editor:

William Craig Rice's article certainly caught my interest. It was refreshing to read a conservative argument based on economic grounds that documents the NEA's long-standing preference for "the most venerable—and richest—cultural establishments over the esoteric, the shocking, and the avant-garde." After spending many hours trying to explain this simple fact to Members of Congress and the press, I appreciate my newfound ability to cite *Policy Review*.

Although I would like to share Rice's sunny view of funding for the arts, I'm afraid I can't overlook some grim realities. The most obvious problem, from my perspective, is that funding for individual artists has been eliminated except for writers, folk artists, and jazz musicians. As a funder of visual artists, I am only too aware of the great increase in need that has arisen because of that mysterious decision. As the article implies, the NEA never did fund very many individual artists, and no artist of whom I am aware could or ever did plan to live on "the dole" of government largesse. Artist funding did provide hope to countless artists whose lives and careers in the best of times are subject to wide fluctuations of income opportunity.

Like all businesses, artists and art institutions face steep increases in basic costs. Unlike manufacturers or retailers, however, they can't increase production or adjust inventory, nor can they control costs in any significant way except to reduce access to the very art they exist to display. As such, the assistance provided by federal support is invaluable. Rice's assumption that money is out there and should be found in sufficient quantities to make the NEA unnecessary is true enough. But his proposed solution—to increase admission costs and develop more effective marketing strategies—serves to make the arts more remote and less accessible to those who may derive the most benefit from it.

The real question, I believe, is not whether the government has an obligation to fund the arts, nor whether there is a sufficient amount of private cash to support art venues and projects. It is whether we have the collective will to live up to the standards we claim for ourselves.

The value of art is that it is not just for children, or the privileged, or the elite, but that it seriously engages adults from all walks of life as it allows them to interact positively, and to broaden the scope of their knowledge and associations. If we really want people to think and to share experiences, funding the arts is basic. The minuscule cost we're talking about—President Clinton's committee recommends $2 per taxpayer—is certainly warranted if we value informed, sophisticated, and independent citizens.

On the other hand, if we want to send the message that we only value that which pays, we can do so by further cutting arts funding. That is the real debate, and we should, at least, be clear about what we want to say.

Sanford Hirsch
Executive Director
Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation
New York, N.Y.

To the Editor;

William Craig Rice is astonished to learn that the National Endowment of the Arts is really (surprise!) a very conservative institution. The NEA overwhelmingly supports the arts establishment, whose organization boards are stocked with staunch Republicans and whose audiences resemble a DAR convention. What could be more conservative than conserving our Eurocentric (male) cultural patrimony?

The NEA has dodged the bullet so far, despite excessively vociferous attacks, exactly because of this powerful conservative constituency. So who wants to kill the NEA and why? Frequent polls indicate that despite all the moral outrage of Jesse Helms, the American people are quite willing to use their tax pennies to support the Endowment.

It is the populist, anti-intellectual, nativist, Pat Buchanan wing of the conservative movement that wants to drive a stake in the NEA. This is a battle in the "culture war," not a case of conservative vs. liberal. Buchanan and his brethren detest the very idea of "high culture" and the pointy-headed intellectuals who staff the art world. But all the talk about public funds paying for pornography is specious. The real smut and the real threat is on MTV. Instead of eviscerating the NEA, we should be sending artists to every venue in America as a bulwark against the crass commercialism of "pop culture."

Rice's nostalgic desire to return to America's cultural beginnings when artists were "itinerant figures" is the equivalent of wishing for physician house calls: It ain't gonna happen! Yes, artists will continue to create whether the NEA survives or not, but why do we need to make permanent a "tradition of hardship"? Conservatives especially should be sympathetic to the NEA's mission: to nurture and support our magnificent heritage in all its elite, folk, and indigenous splendor.

Donald P. Eckard
Assistant Professor, Temple University
Philadelphia, Pa.

To the Editor:

I must disagree with William Craig Rice's article. The arts and artists are withering with the recent loss of federal funding.

In the next millennium, America will be remembered for our artistic culture, not who was president at a certain time or what his stand was on welfare reform. With the dismantling of the NEA, the 1990s will be remembered as a time of greedy capitalism.

In France, there is a deep tradition of government support for the arts and the French do it proudly. In America, we quibble over a mere 38 cents per year from each taxpayer, less than the cost of a can of Coke.

I have been a big critic of the NEA over the years and in fact held a protest art show in 1991 entitled "To Grant or Not To Grant." My past criticisms of the NEA, though, are now being resolved. The NEA is on its way to restructuring.

There is now better oversight of how grants are spent, and the NEA primarily funds specific art projects rather than general operating support.

In the past, the NEA discriminated against realist painters in favor of ab-

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stract artists. Under Chairwoman Jane Alexander, the NEA addressed the cronyism of the 1970s to early 1990s by rotating the membership of its selection committees. My "Grant or Not To Grant" art show urged the NEA to appoint a selection panel qualified to judge realism, which they did by appointing respected realist painter Janet Fish to one of the last Individual Artist Grant committees.

The federal government first supported the arts 125 years ago when a painting by then-emerging artist Thomas Moran was purchased to hang in the halls of Congress. This painting happened to be of the Grand Canyon; its showing in Washington directly led to the saving of the Grand Canyon from commercialization and its preservation as a National Park for all to enjoy today. This purchase also had an investment value: Congress paid $10,000 for this painting that is now worth millions. The Arts Council of Great Britain has successfully purchased art by young artists since 1946. If they can do it, so can we.

Sherry French
Sherry French Gallery
New York, N.Y.

To the Editor:

William Craig Rice's piece on the NEA was interesting, particularly in its exposition that the major beneficiaries are the institutions that have the resources to write the sharpest grant proposals and raise money through myriad avenues. These institutions are, of course, in some ways the ones least in need, given the large number of fundraising options open to them. But this does not negate their role as great and deserving institutions. Nor is 3 percent of a budget really something to be treated as "only" as Rice does. Three percent of his budget probably matters to him, n'est-ce pas?

Richard P. McDonough
Cambridge, Mass.

William Craig Rice Responds: I am grateful for these responses, especially from art-world professionals whose practical knowledge too often goes ignored, and not just by politicians and the media. As Daniel A. Siedell suggests, open discussion is stifled by arts organizations as well, where groupthink makes dissent from pro-NEA orthodoxy almost unknown—and, to judge by my research, unprintable in professional journals where one expects informed debate.

Sanford Hirsch and Richard P. McDonough rightly caution against a Panglossian view of the future of the arts absent the NEA. But there is good reason to believe that increased voluntary support for the arts will follow the end of mandatory (tax-based) support, as it has in other areas of charitable and nonprofit activity. People give where they see a need—but give less when they can ask, "Isn't the government taking care of that?" I agree with Hirsch that the government should encourage the cultivation of "informed, sophisticated, and independent citizens" through involvement in the arts. But this must be done indirectly and blindly—through tax code changes, for example—and not by centralizing aesthetic and cultural authority in a federal agency that gets to pick winners and losers.

Although I disagree with Sherry French about the reformability of the NEA, I applaud her suggestion for practical federal support: the commissioning of great artworks. This can certainly help build public involvement, yet here the record of the NEA is disheartening. Over the years, the agency sponsored a few works of broad popular appeal—though never anything so spectacular as Thomas Moran's 19th-century western landscape paintings. The NEA contribution that most resembled this was the widely unpopular public sculpture program imposed on local communities in the 1970s. Any new national commissioning of artworks should pass a rigorous test of public enthusiasm through fair and open competitions, perhaps with models voted on by visitors to the Capitol Rotunda over a one-year period.

Regarding Joel Conarroe's letter: I did not state that the Guggenheim Foundation stopped supporting artists after Henry Allen Moe's retirement, as he implies in his last paragraph. What I did state, seconding Martin Wooster's research (since published in *Foundation Watch*, March 1997), is that later leaders of the Foundation, lacking Moe's philanthropic imagination, less and less frequently supported "highly gifted but needy or obscure applicants." A modest bit of research supports this observation. I don't have the Fellowship announcements for the year Conarroe cites, but the 1991 and 1996 announcements confirm that the Fellowships typically confer "yet one more credential" upon the already well-credentialed. For example, of the 12 creative writers selected in 1991, six had tenured academic appointments, mostly at elite schools; one was a non-tenured lecturer at Rutgers University; one was a *New Yorker* staff writer. Four were independent, but readers familiar with contemporary letters will quickly recognize them as professional eminences: Carolyn Chute, Francine du Plessix Gray, Francine Prose, and Diana Trilling! Again in 1996, nearly half the creative writers—and nearly half the painters—held senior appointments, overwhelmingly at prestigious institutions. One was even retired from an endowed chair at Wellesley. Further, the data support Wooster's broader characterization of the Guggenheim's "slide toward irrelevance." Fully 10 percent of 1996 Fellows and 13 percent of 1991 Fellows held endowed chairs; in both years, more than two-thirds held senior or tenured appointments. Conarroe is right that his Foundation still supports artists who are highly gifted, needy, and not yet established, including the writers he lists. But the evidence shows that the Guggenheim does this at best intermittently, and that the vast majority of its beneficiaries are not the "academic outlaws" and "two-gun" artists that Henry Allen Moe had the vision to identify and support.

Donald Eckard offers more ideas and opinions than I have space to respond to here. While some of these are unrelated to what I wrote—I expressed no nostalgia for hardship, for example—I agree with Eckard overall. Philistinism and a feeling of exclusion from "high culture" do account for some of the most extreme opposition to the NEA, though not all. And I agree that the NEA issue is "not a case of conservative vs. liberal." It pits an unlikely alliance—individualists (including lots of artists), libertarians, populists, and originalists (in the constitutional sense)—against those who place their faith in centralized expert authority, as embodied in selective sponsorship of the arts by a federal agency.

Correction: The photo on page 64 of the May-June 1997 issue should have been credited to the American Arbitration Association.

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Editorial

The Pursuit of Unhappiness

Rip Van Winkle arose this spring from a slumber of two decades. He gazed in amazement at a world transformed.

The Soviet empire, so menacing when he fell asleep in 1977, was now on the ash heap of history.

Rising protectionism had given way to exploding commerce and tumbling trade barriers.

Nixon-Carter stagflation had been replaced by Reagan-Gingrich prosperity.

Business and profits were no longer dirty words. Now everyone wanted to be an entrepreneur.

Prices for gasoline, airfare, and long-distance phone service had plummeted thanks to competition and deregulation.

California had passed an initiative abolishing racial preferences.

Federal farm and welfare programs dating to the New Deal had been abolished.

Welfare caseloads in Wisconsin had fallen in half.

A new emphasis on local accountability, truth-in-sentencing, and community policing was reducing crime in New York and other major cities.

Congress was debating fundamental Medicare reform that would lower costs and give the elderly more choices.

Leading liberals were pushing for legislation criminalizing late-term abortions.

Congressional Black Caucus leaders were breaking with the teachers unions and the NAACP by endorsing school vouchers.

Conservative Republicans now controlled both houses of Congress and a robust majority of governorships.

Rip Van Winkle had fallen asleep listening to a harangue by Ralph Nader. He awakened to the music of Rush Limbaugh.

But one thing hadn't changed since Rip closed his eyes. Conservatives were still depressed. They were still complaining about their leaders. And they were still failing to build institutions as powerful as their ideas.

The American conservative is seemingly dedicated to three principles: life, liberty, and the pursuit of unhappiness. Something there is about the conservative temperament that loves despair.

The crisis in the conservative movement is its dysfunctional relationship with its elected leaders.

Conservatives have been singing the blues for most of the 20 years this magazine has been published. This is not simply nostalgic yearning for a leader like Ronald Reagan. Conservatives were unhappy during most of *his* administration, too.

In October 1983, *Policy Review* interviewed 12 conservative leaders to ask them what they thought of Ronald Reagan. Nine gave him low ratings.

"If Reagan represents no more than a right-of-center vision of the welfare state, he doesn't represent change; he simply represents cheap government. Republicans cannot win in that framework," said a GOP backbencher now in the congressional leadership.

"The radical surgery that was required in Washington was not performed. Ronald Reagan made a pledge not to touch entitlement programs, and that's one of the few pledges he has kept absolutely," said a top conservative activist.

"This has been essentially another Ford administration. It has been business as usual, not much different from any other Republican administration in our lifetime," said a leading conservative intellectual and journalist.

These quotations, from brilliant people I admire, betray an impatience, a set of unrealistic expectations that lead to dejection when they aren't satisfied, and a failure to create a culture of celebration for conservative achievement. In retrospect, we know that 1983 was a glorious year for conservatism. It was the first year of the Reagan boom. During 1983, as Grover Norquist wrote in these pages in the spring of 1984, "America in the throes of a supply-side recovery created more jobs in 1983 than Canada has created since 1965 ... and as many jobs as Japan created in the entire decade of the 1970s."

That year was also the turning point in the great titanic struggle against communism. As Elizabeth Spalding and Andrew Busch wrote in *Policy Review* in the fall of 1993, "a series of events in 1983 would come together to stop the seemingly inexorable advance of Soviet totalitarianism and to lay the groundwork for the eventual triumph of the West." This was the year of Reagan's "Evil Empire" speech, the launching of the Strategic Defense Initiative, the failure of peace movements to stop Euromissile deployment, the turning of the tide in El Salvador, and the liberation of Grenada.

But conservatives at the time were unaware of the historic significance of these victories. They thought they were losing. They still do. Maybe it's because conservatism still isn't acting as if it wants to govern.

Conservatism today is in a leadership crisis, but the crisis is not what most conservatives think it is. The central problem is not the lackluster quality of the party's presidential candidates. Nor is the central problem the timidity of the GOP congressional leadership in pushing for tax relief, spending cuts, and other conservative priorities.

Instead the crisis is the conservative movement's dysfunctional relationship with its elected political leaders. It

by Adam Meyerson

Adam Meyerson, a vice president of The Heritage Foundation, has been the editor of Policy Review: The Journal of American Citizenship *for the last 14 years.*

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would be unthinkable for top liberal politicians to propose anything as significant as a budget without consulting key groups like the AFL-CIO. But that's exactly what GOP congressional leaders did with the 1997 budget agreement: They simply made the best deal they thought they could get with President Clinton, then handed it to conservative activists as a *fait accompli.* There was no consultation with key conservative activists in advance; no effort to find out which reforms conservative grass-roots groups would mobilize for. GOP leaders seemed to regard the conservative movement as an annoyance, an angry constituency to be mollified, not their strongest ally.

Top-down leadership is inappropriate for a movement that aims to return responsibility back to the states and the people.

The movement is also to blame. Conservatives expect their elected leaders to do all their work for them, to mobilize the grass roots, to persuade Americans of the importance of conservative reforms. This isn't how teachers unions or environmentalists or civil-rights leaders conduct politics. Activists on the Left organize parades their politicians can march in front of. Conservatives expect their pols to fly the banners and beat the drums themselves. Then they whine when no one marches.

Exhibit A is the budget showdown of 1995. Republicans in Congress cut taxes, cut spending, boldly challenged Clinton to the point of shutting down the government. And what support did they get, district by district, precinct by precinct, from conservative activists around the country? Zilch. Instead conservatives groused that their leaders hadn't devised the right communications strategy.

Conservatives are yearning for a national leader or leaders who will galvanize and inspire the country through the national media. A Churchill, an FDR, a Reagan. But this is a model of leadership for war or a catastrophe like the Great Depression. A top-down, centralized leadership style is inappropriate for peacetime, especially for a movement that aims to decentralize power and return responsibility back to states and to the people. Conservatism today doesn't require national leaders with a dominating political presence or an eloquent media personality; what it needs most are movement-builders who will encourage and elicit leadership among the conservative movement and the American people.

Ronald Reagan told Notre Dame students in 1981 that the West would not simply contain communism, it would *transcend* communism. With the failure of the liberal state, with the collapse of family and community and school after 60 years of liberal control of domestic policy and the national culture, conservatives now have the opportunity to roll back liberalism at home just as Ronald Reagan rolled back the Evil Empire abroad. This will require, to borrow Reagan's formulation, that Big Government not merely be contained. It must be transcended. And to transcend the liberal welfare state, conservatives must devote the next 20 to 30 years to building private and local institutions that will outperform Big Government in addressing the nation's needs. Needed are hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of American citizens reasserting their leadership over failing schools, failing criminal justice systems, failing approaches to providing opportunity for the poor, and an ugly, coarse culture that brings out the worst in human nature.

This magazine aims to report on, to celebrate, and to stimulate the great wave of social entrepreneurship that will rebuild America. Our publisher, Edwin J. Feulner, president of The Heritage Foundation for 20 years, has long described himself as an "optimistic entrepreneur." Optimistic because he is confident that conservative ideas of freedom and responsibility work. An entrepreneur because he constantly looks for opportunities to advance conservative principles, even in times of political setback, and because he has dedicated his life to building an institution larger than himself that turns conservative ideas into action. Conservatism will need more of this institution-building spirit if it is to accomplish even more over the next two decades than it has over the past 20 years.

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Blessings of Liberty

AN APPRECIATION OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM

Dividends of Deregulation

by John Hood

John Hood is the president of the John Locke Foundation, in Raleigh, North Carolina, and the author of The Heroic Enterprise: Business and the Common Good *(Free Press).*

Washington, D.C., in the mid-1970s must have felt like heaven on earth to federal regulators and those who favor government control over the nation's economic activity.

From 1970 to 1975, federal spending on regulation grew by 77 percent (in inflation-adjusted dollars) and regulatory staffs grew by 46 percent. President Nixon had created new federal oversight agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. It was the heyday of lobbying groups and self-styled consumer watchdogs that prodded, cajoled, protested, litigated, and otherwise drove regulatory policymaking in many areas of economic and social life that previously had been the domain of state governments or the private sector.

In the two decades since, however, politicians of both parties have voted to deregulate major industries and dismantle some of the bureaucracies that oversaw them. In that time, deregulation has improved the lives of every American by raising the quality of service and shaving billions of dollars off the cost of telephone service, natural gas, and air travel, as well as the groceries, clothes, and other goods transported by truck or rail (see table).

This early wave of deregulation in the mid- and late 1970s slightly predated the supply-side revolution on taxes. Thus it can be viewed as the first major milestone of the emerging movement toward free-market economics. A new report by Robert Crandall of the Brookings Institution and Jerry Ellig of George Mason University's Center for Market Processes examines five deregulation efforts undertaken since the mid-1970s:

Natural Gas. Under strict federal regulation since 1954, the natural-gas industry began to exhibit shortages in the late 1960s. By the 1970s, producers were unable or unwilling to supply as much gas as customers wanted to buy at the regulated price.

Since Ford and Carter began deregulating U.S. industries, consumers have saved billions.

In 1978, Congress set a timetable for deregulation of most natural-gas prices. By 1985, when all gas discovered after 1976 was freed from federal price regulations, gas prices began a steep plunge. After that, federal regulators began to transform natural-gas pipelines into "open access" transporters of gas from various producers. Deregulation not only lowered prices for consumers, Crandall and Ellig state, but also improved the quality of service by removing the threat of artificially created shortages.

Airlines. Before 1978, both the maximum and minimum fares for air travel were set by the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB). The CAB began to loosen its regulations in the mid-1970s. In 1978, Congress passed legislation to abolish the CAB within six years, open up the industry to new competitors, and eliminate government-set fares.

"Virtually all observers, including airline commissions established by both President Clinton and President Bush, agree that deregulation dramatically lowered air fares," Crandall and Ellig write. They conclude that when adjustments are made for other factors that could explain fare reduction, deregulation still emerges as a major cause of the savings. One study found that deregulation had saved passengers $12.4 billion annually. Also, deregulation improved the quality of air travel by increasing frequency of flights in many areas and reducing transfers.

Trucking. Federal regulation of interstate trucking began in 1935. Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, economic research showed that trucking rates would be far lower in a competitive marketplace. In response to the growing opposition to interstate regulation, Congress passed legislation in 1980 that virtually deregulated the trucking industry.

Within six years, the number of licensed motor carriers had doubled. As Crandall and Ellig note, many of these new carriers were small owner-operators who had previously worked for the large licensed companies. Even as the total number of carriers increased, however, portions of the industry such as the "less than truckload" (L.T.L.) market began to concentrate. By 1993, the four largest carriers accounted for nearly half of all L.T.L. revenues.

Still, rates fell and have stayed low after deregulation. According to several studies, even L.T.L. rates seem to have fallen by about 17 percent from 1980 to 1985, and afterward by about 2.1 percent a year. Competition also gave birth to many quality enhancements, such as innovative tracking and monitoring services to ensure prompt and safe delivery.

Railroads. The collapse of the merged Penn Central rail line in the mid-1970s prompted a major push to deregulate and transform the railroad sector. Congress passed a bill in 1976 that allowed railroads to merge and to abandon unprofitable routes; in 1980, Congress deregulated rates for some commodities. Gradually, rate deregulation extended to about 90 percent of rail traffic. Crandall and Ellig conclude that price declines after deregulation were significant, though smaller than those in trucking.

Perhaps more importantly, rail deregulation led to improved service. "Prior to deregulation, many shippers

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considered the term 'rail service' an oxymoron," Crandall and Ellig write. "The main reason was that regulation rendered railroads so unprofitable that they failed to invest in maintenance and improvement." During the first five years after deregulation, railroad delivery time improved by 30 percent.

Telecommunications. The first movement toward competitive long-distance telephone service came not from Washington policymakers but from the entrepreneurial efforts of Microwave Communications Inc. (MCI). In 1969, MCI won federal permission to begin competing with the AT&T monopoly to provide "private-line" long-distance to companies, but did not receive the go-ahead to enter the ordinary long-distance market for businesses or residences.

MCI clandestinely began to offer standard long-distance to businesses in 1974 without authorization by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The FCC tried to stop MCI, but lost in federal court. The FCC did authorize competition in telephone equipment, a move ratified by the courts in 1977.

As the pressure for competition in the long-distance and telephone-equipment industries began to heat up, the federal government challenged AT&T's use of its monopoly on local telephone service to compete unfairly. Its legal actions finally led to a consent degree in 1982 that split Ma Bell into seven local telephone companies and a separate long-distance and equipment business that retained the AT&T name.

Crandall and Ellig estimate that equipment prices fell by 6 to 7 percent a year between 1972 and 1987. Long-distance rates have fallen after deregulation, as well, though there is some disagreement about the magnitude and causes of the decline. Competition has also improved quality dramatically and led to the introduction of many new devices and services.

Critics of deregulation like to claim that this massive wave of deregulation was instigated by the regulated industries themselves, out of gross self-interest. Businesses, they say, naturally oppose rules placed on them by government, and will always work to reduce or eliminate them.

In fact, many businesses welcome regulation. In industries such as trucking, natural gas, and airlines, existing firms often benefited by federal regulations on price and entry that served to restrict competition and thus inflate their profit margins. Before the deregulation of interstate trucking, for example, there were some 20,000 trucking firms in the United States. Today there are more than 300,000, mostly small businesses operating in niche markets such as the transport of high-value goods like pharmaceuticals or service to out-of-the-way markets.

This increase in competitors did not please existing common carriers that owned expensive operating certificates from the federal Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC). Before regulation, when entry into trucking was carefully restricted, an ICC operating license was worth billions of dollars. This constituted an investment in regulation that the existing firms did not want to see devalued.

In the case of trucking, as in many others, the ammunition for reform efforts was supplied by academic research and public-policy think tanks. The 1960s may have heralded the beginning of the modern federal regulatory state, but they also ushered in a truly remarkable period of careful research into the history and economic effects of regulation. The University of Chicago, through the *Journal of Law and Economics*, was one source of this work, as was the American Enterprise Institute, the first Washington-based free-market think tank. Its older and more liberal counterpart, the Brookings Institution, also began to publish empirical research questioning the basis for federal regulation in many areas.

Champions of Competition

Business journalist Susan Lee points out in her invaluable book *Hands Off* that the change in expert opinion about regulation began to show itself in Washington in the mid-1970s. Nixon had often talked about getting government off the back of business, but actually moved in the opposite direction. His successor, Gerald Ford, however, lamented the cost that regulation imposed on private economic decisions, and pushed for deregulation in the transportation sector. President Carter continued this campaign, while promoting deregulation in financial markets, telecommunications, and energy as well. In 1978, Congress passed and Carter signed landmark legislation to deregulate natural-gas production and airlines.

Today's hot regulatory issues involve communications, electrical power, and financial services. Deregulation of these industries promises to be a much more complicated task than the previous generation of regulatory reform. In all three cases, for example, states play a sizable or dominant role in regulating rates and condition of entry.

Still, the good news is that deregulation-minded policymakers in Washington are embracing the challenge. They know that consumers spend a lot more on local telephone service, electrical power, and insurance premiums than they ever will on long-distance or natural gas. There are, in other words, even more potential benefits for consumers from the new round of deregulation than the old—and lot more to lose if the process runs aground.

The Consumer Benefits of Deregulation

Industry	Year Deregulation Began	Real Price Reduction Over 10 Years (%)	Annual Value of Consumer Benefits (est.)
Natural Gas	1984	27-57%	n.a.
Long-distance Tel.	1984	40-47%	$5 billion
Airlines	1977	29%	$19.4 billion
Trucking	1980	28-58%	$19.6 billion
Railroad	1980	44%	$9.1 billion

Source: *Economic Deregulation and Customer Choice: Lessons for the Electric Industry* by Robert Crandall & Jerry Ellig. Note: All figures in real 1995 dollars.

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Laboratories of Democracy

One Cloud, Fifty Silver Linings

Are you better off now than you were 20 years ago? This is the question conservatives ought to be asking instead of second-guessing Republican strategy in last year's presidential race or grumbling over the incredible shrinking tax cuts in the federal budget deal.

Conservatism's biggest victories of the past 20 years have actually occurred in the states, where popular support for individual liberties, smaller government, and traditional values has grown tremendously since liberalism's heyday in the 1970s. In the first of a series of dispatches from the 50 states, *Policy Review* monitors a number of political trends that answer the question posed above with a resounding "yes!"

Iowa and Taxes

In 1977, the top rate for state income taxes in Iowa was a whopping 13 percent. Upon the death of a parent, moreover, an Iowan could wind up paying that rate on anything he inherited. A lot has changed since then.

"This is the best year we've ever had," says Jeff Boeyink, the executive director of Iowans for Tax Relief. Iowans have recently been blessed with a 10 percent across-the-board cut in income taxes (the top rate is now 8.98 percent), the elimination of the inheritance tax for lineal descendants, and $21 million in property-tax reduction. These tax cuts add up to $266 million in relief for Iowa taxpayers.

Jerry Bair, the state's revenue and finance director, has worked in the revenue department since 1975. He contends that Iowa taxpayers are much better off today, especially since the state put an end to inflation-driven bracket creep and reformed tax laws to benefit elderly Iowans who live off annuities.

Taxpayers in Iowa have waited a long time for such relief. It was not until Republicans captured the state House of Representatives in 1992 that the legislature passed a law limiting expenditures to 99 percent of the next year's anticipated tax revenues. In other words, the state agreed not only to spend less money than it collected, but also not to spend any unexpected revenue windfall. Within three years, Iowa turned a $400-million deficit into a $400-million surplus.

As the deficit shrank, the state started giving taxpayers some of their own money back: It slashed $100 million from property taxes in 1994, tripled the credit for dependents and expanded the income exemption for pensioners in 1995, and completed the full indexation of income-tax brackets in 1996.

Idaho and the Right to Work

The political campaigns of 1996 highlighted the labor unions' controversial practice of using mandatory dues from their members to support partisan candidates. The larger issue for workers, however, is whether unions should be allowed to force them to become members against their will.

The principle that workers do have the right to join a union if they choose, but ought not to be forced to join as a condition of employment, is known as "right to work." Laws that guarantee employees' right to work are mainly intended to ensure individual freedom in the workplace, but proponents argue that such laws have economic benefits, too.

Right-to-work legislation in Idaho had long been stymied by politics until 1985, when the legislature overrode Governor John Evans's veto and right-to-work became law. Two years later, the state's economy began an economic boom that continues to this day. Idaho's unemployment rate is the lowest it's been in 25 years. Commerce Department statistics show that Idaho's annual growth of 15.4 percent in per-capita personal income was the highest in the nation from 1987 to 1995. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor

The real conservative triumphs of the last 20 years have come in the states.

Statistics, economic growth in the 21 states that have right-to-work laws has outpaced the rest of the country by 25 percent since 1991.

"Having the right to work has not only meant freedom of choice, it also means Idaho has led the nation in new jobs and income growth in the decade since it became law," says Gary Glenn, an Ada County Commissioner and the former executive director of the Idaho Freedom to Work Committee. Explains James T. Bennett, an economist at George Mason University, "In states without right-to-work laws, high taxes and the high cost of living erode the purchasing power of income." On average, he says, families in states with right-to-work laws are better off.

South Dakota and Abortion

South Dakota is a model for swift action taken to counter the nefarious effects of judicial activism. In 1973, the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* forced the states to legalize all abortions in the first and second trimesters of pregnancy, and to permit them for health reasons in the third trimester. "Not a pleasant occurrence for the people of South Dakota," recalls Jeremiah Murphy, a long-time lobbyist for the Catholic Church, for the state had to forfeit its 74-year-old

by Bernadette Malone

Bernadette Malone is a national political reporter for Evans & Novak, *and a former staff member in the New York state senate.*

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ban on all abortions. "Any time something becomes legal, it becomes moral" to a lot of people, says Marcella Effertz, a Catholic Diocese official.

But in spite of the legalization of abortion, the state has worked hard to preserve the South Dakota tradition of respect for human life. In the last 20 years, the legislature has adopted resolutions supporting the Human Life Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and opposing the Equal Rights Amendment because of their implications for abortion. It has passed laws prohibiting the use of tax money for abortion, and has instituted a 24-hour waiting period for anyone seeking an abortion procedure. This year alone, the legislature passed, by overwhelming margins, a ban on partial-birth abortions and a requirement that minors notify their parents before obtaining the procedure.

Fortunately for countless children and young adults alive in South Dakota today, pro-lifers in the 1970s established crisis-pregnancy centers across the state. These centers have since convinced hundreds of young women with unwanted pregnancies to choose an alternative to abortion.

"[The situation] has definitely gotten better," says Dan Wunrow, the executive director of South Dakota Right to Life. According to Wunrow, his organization's membership has quadrupled in five years and his state usually ranks first or near first on the list of states with the lowest annual number of abortions relative to population.

New York and Rent Control

Living in New York City during the 1970s, I was always astounded by the number of dilapidated and abandoned apartment houses woven into the fabric of Manhattan's pricey real-estate market. Equally shocking were the stories of well-to-do people paying bargain rents to live in the city's trendiest areas.

A recent *New York Times Magazine* article by writer John Tierney described a rent-regulated building in Manhattan in which rents for two-bedroom apartments range from $300 to $1,600 a month. Tierney (a beneficiary of rent control himself) writes: "Although rent regulation is often defended as essential protection for the poor throughout the city, it disproportionately benefits the middle and upper classes in Manhattan." Such are the consequences of rent control, a system of price regulations on landlords first enacted by the federal government in 1942 to protect the needy and aid returning veterans.

In 1949, states were granted the right to regulate their own rents, and New York began the slow process of deregulating some of its apartments. But after the cost of living rose dramatically in the 1970s, rent control in New York City made a monumental comeback. In 1974, the state legislature regulated previously exempt apartments and reregulated apartments whose price controls had expired.

As economists predicted, landlords could not cover the rising costs of maintaining their property with the low rents their tenants were required to pay, so many of them abandoned their investments or let them slide into ruin. In luxury buildings that contained only a handful of regulated apartments, many of New York's wealthiest found homes intended for middle-class tenants.

In spite of *Roe v. Wade*, South Dakota has worked hard to preserve its tradition of respect for human life.

This year, the tide is finally turning. Joseph Bruno, the state Senate majority leader and an upstate Republican, is leading the charge to dismantle New York City's Byzantine system of rent regulations, which were scheduled to expire as this issue went to press. "They are the single greatest impediment to creating new housing opportunities for New Yorkers," he says. For this apostasy, he has become the target of personal and political attacks.

Herb London, a former dean at New York University and perhaps Manhattan's lone archconservative, believes rent-control deregulation is the premier issue this year for New York conservatives. At presstime, it looks as if London was right to predict that deregulation for now will not be as sweeping as many conservatives would like: Rent-controlled apartments may be deregulated only when vacated by their current tenants.

But 20 years ago, the climate for this debate simply didn't exist. "Now you've got both liberal economists and conservative economists agreeing that rent control has really stifled New York City's market," says Zenia Mucha, a spokeswoman for Governor George Pataki.

Texas and Guns

It will undoubtedly surprise some readers that Second Amendment rights are even at issue in the Lone Star State. "Texas has a reputation for being a gun-slinging state," explains Dave Burdett, who owns a gun shop in Bryan, Texas, "but in actuality it never was legally a place where you could sling a gun." Wary of Confederate veterans returning home from the Civil War and fomenting trouble, the legislature passed a law in 1871 prohibiting any residents from carrying weapons.

As violent crime has escalated in recent decades, however, so has the desire of private citizens to arm themselves outside the home. But not until 1995 did Governor George W. Bush get the chance to sign a "right-to-carry" bill. The governor's support for the right of citizens to carry concealed weapons in public for self-protection became a key campaign issue during his 1994 race against Ann Richards, who had twice vetoed such bills as governor. Richards and her allies argued that allowing Texans to carry their weapons outside their homes would promote crime. "They haven't had much to turn to and say, 'See, we told you so,' " chuckles Jim Brown, a retired veterinarian and gun-rights activist.

Brown fought successfully in 1988 to ensure that Texans retained their Second Amendment protections no matter where they traveled. For instance, before 1988, a rural Texan with a hunting rifle in the back seat of his car suddenly became an assault-weapon-wielding criminal when he passed through certain cities. Now the legislative chairman of the Texas State Rifle Association, Brown is still waging battle on behalf of gun owners. Two bills before the state legislature this year would expand the 1995 law to redress concessions by the gun-rights lobby to ensure passage, such as age restrictions on the ownership of guns.

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One Nation Under God

Jailhouse Rock of Ages

When it comes to fighting crime, liberals and conservatives alike seem to be shadowboxing—dodging the most fateful aspect of criminal justice, the religious dimension. Liberals want more money for rehabilitation programs, which often amount to nothing more than fuzzy self-esteem courses or cushy entertainment privileges. Conservatives correctly expose the failure of these initiatives and rightly demand hard time for serious offenders. But they are too eager to abandon criminals to a system that almost certainly will further harden their hearts.

Charles Colson, who has probably been in more prisons than any man in America, is calling for a new approach to rehabilitation, one defined by its moral and religious mettle—one that seeks, in a word, redemption.

Colson—the Watergate felon turned evangelical Christian—is the founder of Prison Fellowship, a Christian outreach effort active in 90 percent of America's prisons. After 20 years of creating piecemeal programs for inmates and ex-cons, Colson wants to launch the spiritual equivalent of Desert Storm. In April, the first wave of his church-based volunteers invaded a Texas prison to offer two dozen inmates round-the-clock Christian education and training.

Although state guards continue to provide security, Prison Fellowship staffers run virtually all other day-to-day activities in one wing of the Jester II facility, a minimum-security prison outside Houston. Call it the God Pod. Prayers have replaced early-morning push-ups, while group Bible discussions have pre-empted evening MTV. The ultimate objective: To help as many men as possible become followers of Christ.

"You can teach people about character, but what is needed is the transformation of the human will," Colson says. "There has to be something in people that makes them want to do the right thing. That's what Christian conversion does that nothing else does."

The initiative brings together, under one roof, some of the most effective Prison Fellowship programs developed since its inception in 1976. Inmates enter a vigorous routine of counseling, work, accountability, and restitution. Virtually every activity, from learning to control anger to acquiring good work habits, is connected to Christian teaching. Volunteers, always the lifeblood of this organization, will continue to be crucial: Every three months another two dozen teachers and mentors will be paired with a fresh cadre of inmates at the facility. About 300 volunteers eventually will work with 200 prisoners—well over half the inmate population.

Ray Roberts, Prison Fellowship's program director for Jester II, says most criminals need a radical overhaul of their moral machinery, their sense of right and wrong. "We want to create a climate where spiritual and moral rebirth can take place," he says, "where inmates can restore and develop their relationship with God, their families and their communities."

How did Texas officials agree to host one of the boldest experiments in criminal rehabilitation in a generation?

With 160,000 inmates, Texas maintains the largest prison population and the highest incarceration rate in the nation. The Lone Star State spends $4 billion a year in corrections, making it the largest item in the budget. If taxpayers think they're investing in the rehabiliation of criminals, however, they don't get much bang for the buck: Nearly half of the state's ex-prisoners are rearrested within three years of their release.

That's pretty close to the national average. Indeed, the typical offender is careening down a long, tortuous road of criminal behavior. Most have been flouting the law since they were teenagers, and most will continue well into adulthood. We have, in fact, created a system in which one in three serious offenders have already racked up at least five prior arrests; in which the majority of ex-cons are recidivists who commit an average of 15 crimes a year; in which a third of ex-cons who rob, rape, or murder again do so while on probation, parole, or pre-trial release.

It is a system in which almost every effort to upset this lifestyle of lawlessness—short of incarceration—will fail.

A Texas prison tests a new approach to rehabilitation: full-time Christian education and training.

"We've not been able to affect recidivism in decade after decade of experimenting," says Byron Johnson, a criminologist at Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas. "The best we've been able to say is this: Some things work with some offenders some of the time."

A New Value System

Prison Fellowship, however, points to research suggesting that the majority of prisoners in the program will successfully reintegrate into society. A recent study by the National Institute for Healthcare Research found that inmates in four New York prisons who attended at least 10 Bible studies a year were three times more likely to stay out of trouble after their release than those who didn't. Johnson, who helped conduct the study, asks, "If 10 measly Bible studies had this effect, what will happen when they get religious programming and nurturing around the clock?"

Texas law enforcement officials are ready to find out. Most of the inmates selected for the program are chronic adult offenders between the age of 18 to 55. Among the initial 26 participants

by Joe Loconte

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are several convicted of murder, rape, and assault. "We all bring a lot of garbage to the table, but these people bring a tremendous amount," says Carol Vance, a member of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice, the governing body of the state's prison and probation system.

Officials call the two-year program "Innerchange." The first phase, with its Bible-based emphasis on rebuilding values and character, begins 18 months before an inmate is released. The second phase tests his new value system in real life, through community-service projects and other activities.

Participants rise at 5 A.M. for a session of Scripture reading and prayer. They spend most of the morning at a prison job or studying to earn a GED, the equivalent of a high-school diploma. Afternoons are filled with instruction in "life skills," from better work habits to parenting and marital advice. Evenings feature Christian teaching and group discussions.

Sin vs. Self-Esteem

The final phase—the program's acid test—begins when the prisoner is released. For six months, a volunteer mentor works closely with the ex-offender to help him repair relationships, especially with his family members and his victims. Cathy McVey, an assistant program director with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, calls this "restorative justice"—an approach mostly neglected by traditional rehabilitation schemes. "We can't find state dollars to do that type of support," she says.

Even if states had the money, however, most lack the right philosophy of rehabilitation. Government-funded programs often duck questions of personal responsibility; they substitute biblical ideas about sin with saccharine notions of self-esteem.

"Other programs focus on depression, self-esteem," Johnson says. "These self-help, image-producing programs don't affect outcomes. They make men feel better about themselves, but that doesn't make them better men." Roberts, a 21-year veteran in adult corrections, agrees: "Inmates tend to blame everybody for their problems. Our focus is getting them to understand that they are responsible to God, their families, and their victims."

To do so, Prison Fellowship is performing a high-wire act in church-state relations. The program receives no government money, yet it operates in the belly of a state correctional facility. Inmates need not claim a Christian faith, but must be willing to participate fully in a "Bible-based, Christ-centered" program. And though they are allowed to pursue their own religious beliefs—one participant attends weekly Islamic services—the explicit goal is Christian conversion.

commissioned a task force to recommend ways to ease the state's regulatory burden on religiously based service groups. The task force's final report urged state officials to allow faith-based organizations a greater role in criminal rehabilitation.

The Texas program got its genesis from a similar effort begun in Brazil in 1969. That initiative, which soon involved inmates in half the cells in Sao Paolo's infamous Humaita prison, has

Inmates enjoy a worship service in the Jester II prison.

Photo courtesy of Prison Fellowship

State officials say they are not worried about First Amendment challenges because the program is completely voluntary, accepts no government funding, and does not discriminate on the basis of religion. Civil libertarian groups have so far been quiet. The state's Department of Criminal Justice unanimously approved the plan last November and it quickly earned the backing of the state's attorney general. Says Pat Nolan, the president of Justice Fellowship, the public-policy arm of Prison Fellowship, "The attorney general feels that we've structured this thing so that it's airtight."

The Evidence Is in

One of the initiative's most vocal supporters is Governor George W. Bush. No matter what the social problem may be, Bush likes to say, "There is no overcoming anything without faith." Indeed, the governor helped pave the way for the program in 1996 when he seen recidivism rates plunge to below 5 percent. Today the program is active in more than 40 prisons throughout Brazil.

But the Texas experiment is the first of its kind in the United States, and it might not have happened without an emerging tide of research indicating that involvement in religious activities inhibits criminal behavior.

"It's remarkable how much good empirical evidence there is that religious belief can make a positive difference," says John DiIulio, a professor of politics and public affairs at Princeton University. Patrick Fagan, an analyst of family and cultural issues at The Heritage Foundation, agrees. "Religious behavior is associated with reduced crime," he says. "This has been known in the social-science literature for over 20 years."

Known, yes—but mostly ignored. A 1995 review of all relevant criminology literature, concluding that religious in-

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fluences probably do discourage crime and delinquency, has helped get the attention of policymakers, DiIulio says. At a Washington news conference to announce the Texas program, he said it is now "intellectually irresponsible" to ignore the "faith factor" in tackling social problems.

The "faith factor" will continue to form the basis of Prison Fellowship's outreach to convicts at Jester II well beyond their release from prison. Vance, a former district attorney in Houston, has long believed in the need to involve church-based volunteers in the state's prisons. "This is more than just going to church," he says. "I'm talking about God really getting hold of people's lives." Roberts agrees: "The key is for faith communities to become invested in seeing inmates become successful."

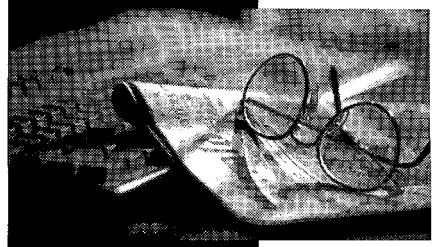
Mentors and other church volunteers will help ex-cons with a range of practical issues, from holding down a job to managing the family finances. But they also hope to keep former criminals on the straight and narrow by getting them actively involved in local churches and keeping them away from some of their old haunts and habits. "If you have a group of people coming out of prison, moving into your neighborhood," asks Nolan, "wouldn't you feel better if they were an active part of a Christian community?"

Prison Fellowship is so certain of the answer to that question that it has commissioned a two-year study of its Texas experiment. With funding from the ministry and from the state of Texas, the National Institute for Healthcare Research eventually will track all 200 inmates in the program. Johnson, who will conduct the study, says any significant drop in the number of re-arrests will count as a success. After seeing the results in New York, he has high hopes: "We have a chance to cut the recidivism rate in half."

If that happens, Prison Fellowship officials say they'll take the program on the road. "We want to be in every state and federal prison in the country," says president Thomas Pratt, "building the church inside prison walls."

The apostle Paul, who also spent much of his life under arrest, would likely approve. He once praised a fellow Christian named Onesiphorus "because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains."

Cal Thomas
William Buckley
Pat Buchanan
Ariana Huffington
Thomas Sowell
Robert Novak
Suzanne Fields
Tony Snow
...and many more!



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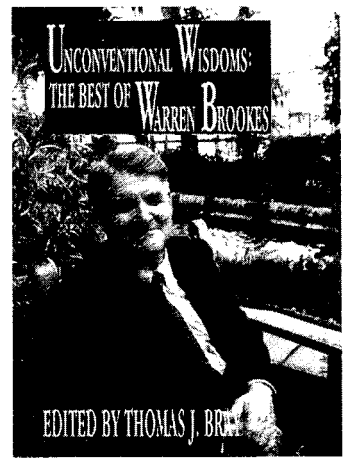
Unconventional Wisdoms: The Best of Warren Brookes
Edited by Thomas J. Bray



This book is a collection of Warren Brookes's work compiled and edited by his *Detroit News* editor, Thomas J. Bray. Warren was a staff writer for the *Detroit News* and a columnist for the *Washington Times*.

From his indefatigable fact-gathering, Warren showed that much of what the experts had to say seemed badly out of step with reality. He made a virtual career out of debunking the conventional wisdoms. His nationally-syndicated column presented the unconventional wisdom not only about economics but a wide range of subjects, especially environmentalism. Many of the articles collected here have a timeless quality, and are a journalistic model to be emulated.

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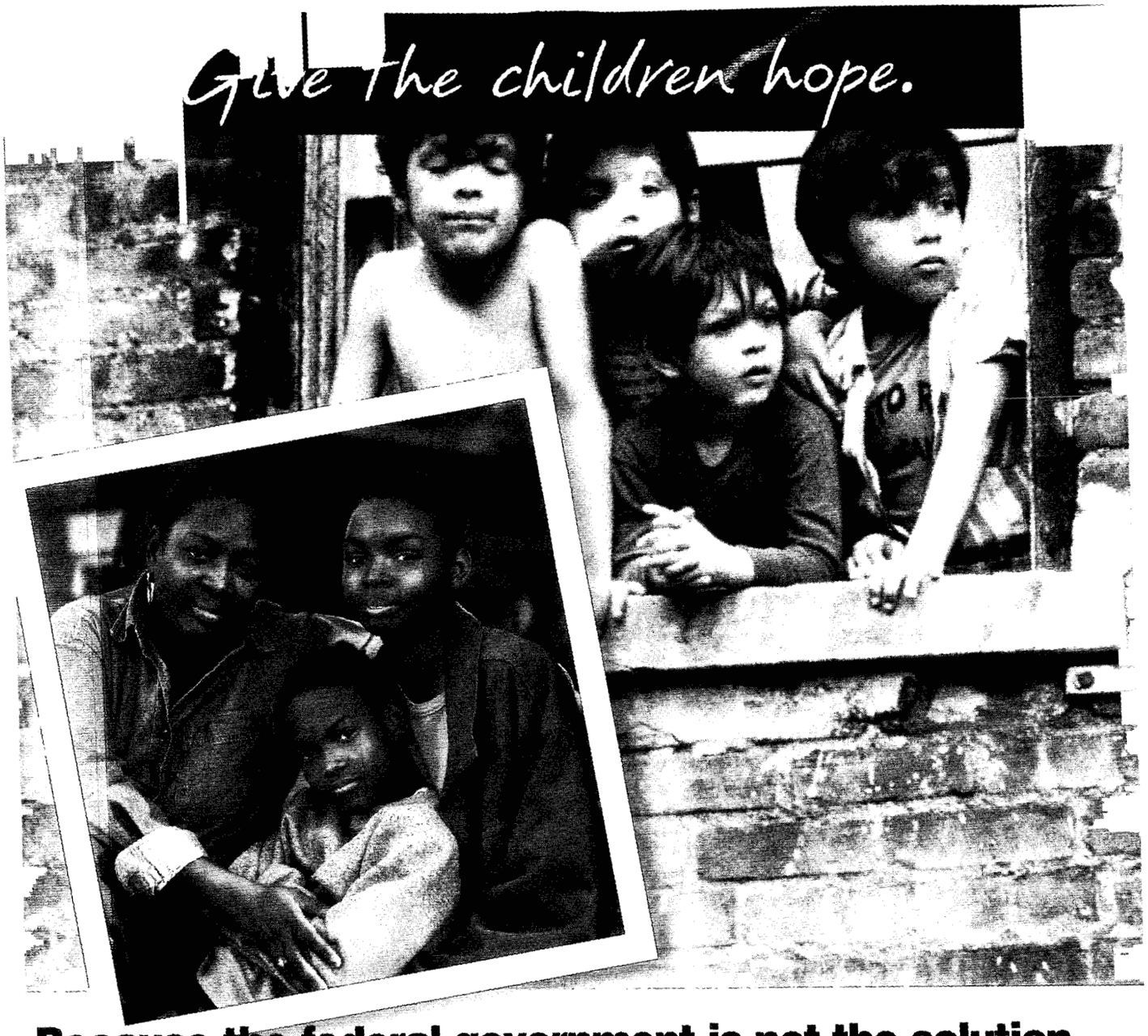

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Reagan Betrayed

Are Conservatives Fumbling His Legacy?

Grover G. Norquist
Michael Reagan
Sen. Phil Gramm
Ralph Reed
Elliott Abrams
Gary Bauer
Gov. Frank Keating
Sen. Trent Lott
Rep. Christopher Cox
Gov. David Beasley
James C. Miller III
Rep. Dick Armey
Rep. David McIntosh
Jeane Kirkpatrick

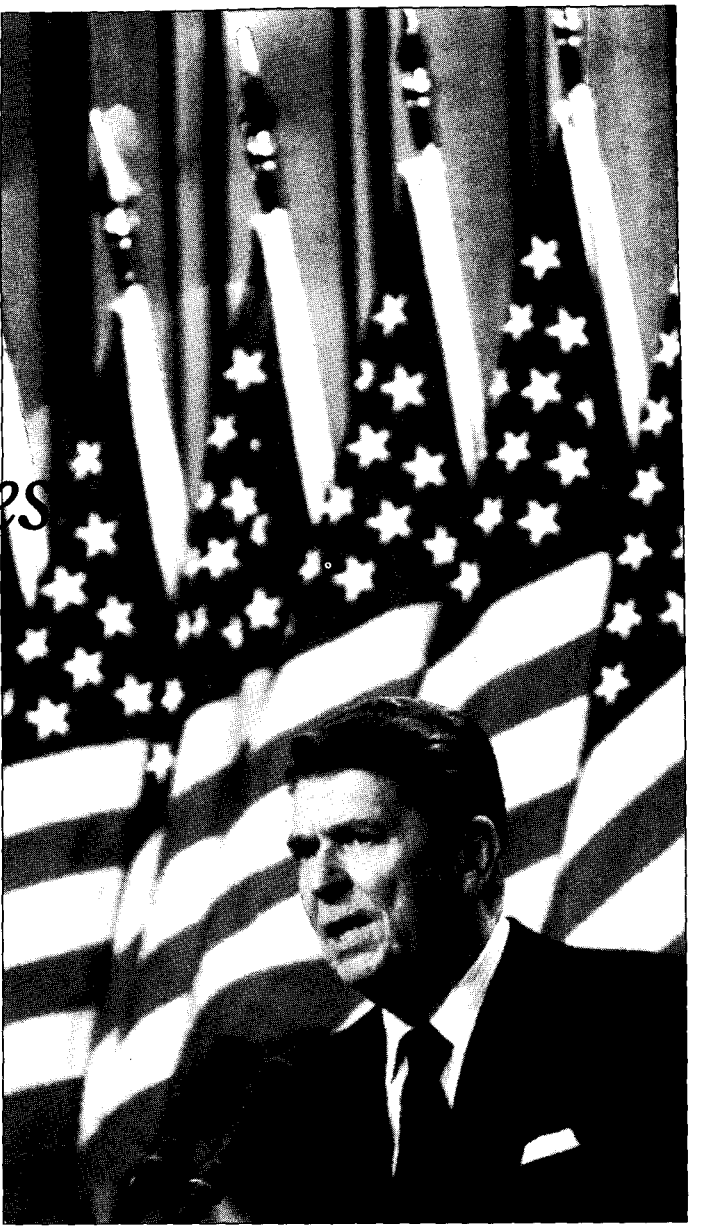

Photo courtesy of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library

What can conservatives today learn most from Ronald Reagan? Which features of Reagan's legacy (his principles, his rhetoric, his policies, his leadership style) are conservatives today most in danger of forgetting or betraying? *Policy Review* asked these questions of several of the conservative movement's top leaders.

— Grover G. Norquist —

Before Ronald Reagan, great men like Whittaker Chambers said and believed that conservatives were on the "losing side of history." In the 1950s, Bill Buckley said that the task of conservatives was to "stand athwart history and yell 'stop.' " From Ronald Reagan, conservatives have learned optimism and discovered they are on the winning side of history.

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Today, conservatives know that it is Marxism-Leninism that is in the dustbin of history, and we march with confidence against the welfare state. Speaker Newt Gingrich and Majority Leader Trent Lott move to abolish the capital-gains tax and the death tax and propose a single-rate tax on income or retail sales. Every conservative knows that we will win radical tax reform and reduction as soon as we elect a president who will sign the bill. The flow of history is with us. Our victories can be delayed, but not denied. This is the change wrought by Ronald Reagan.

But conservative leaders sometimes forget that one of Reagan's great strengths was his ability to remain in visionary mode. He called for tax cuts, then left it to staffers such as James Baker to negotiate and compromise as needed to get a tax cut through Congress. Reagan himself never spoke about compromises. When one Republican leader was quoted recently as saying that conservatives lacked the votes to abolish the National Endowment for the Arts, the press misconstrued the statement as a retreat from efforts to defund the NEA. Leaders should keep their eyes on the goal and leave such comments to their staffs.

Conservatives should also remember Reagan's willingness to repeat his message—over and over again. Active minds find it difficult to repeat, in speech after speech, the conservative goals of lower taxes, less regulation, and smaller government. But when you give the speech for the 100th time, there will be someone in the audience who is hearing it for the first time. Younger voters are always being introduced to the conservative message.

"From Reagan, conservatives have learned they are on the winning side of history."
—Grover G. Norquist

Conservatives are repeating one important error of the 1980s. During the Reagan years, conservative activists often complained that they would win the day if only the president would focus on their issue of concern long enough to make a few phone calls or send out a letter or have a meeting. This, of course, was true. A president can win any small battle in which he engages. But there were hundreds, perhaps thousands, of possible problems to solve. We complained about what Reagan or his underlings failed to do for us. Now some conservatives are falling into the same trap, as they complain that we could win issue X if Gingrich or Lott won it for us. Whining about Gingrich or Lott is no substitute for doing the hard work of fighting these battles ourselves.

Grover G. Norquist is the president of Americans for Tax Reform, in Washington, D.C.

—— Michael Reagan ——

On the day he was inaugurated, my father placed his hand on his mother's well-worn Bible and took the presidential oath of office. His hand rested on 2 Chronicles 7:14: "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

America certainly needed healing that day. We had endured a long national nightmare: the Iranian hostage crisis, double-digit inflation, and entrenched pessimism. Our economy was in ruins. Our hollow military seemed no match for the Soviet power that threatened the globe.

But the next eight years changed all that.

Ronald Reagan had long known what he intended to do in office. In 1976, he wrote a newspaper column, "Tax Cuts and Increased Revenue," that foreshadowed supply-side Reaganomics. He predicted that cutting tax rates would increase, not shrink federal tax revenues. In 1981, he signed those tax cuts into law—and tax revenue rose dramatically, from $599 billion in 1981 to $991 billion in 1989.

He predicted that Soviet communism was headed for the ash heap of history. Liberal pundits snickered—but Ronald Reagan had the last laugh. The fall of the Soviet Union was no accident of history, but was methodically planned and executed within the Reagan White House.

Ronald Reagan restored America's military and respect for American leadership around the world. He restored the American dream and defended the American family. He brought our economy roaring back to life again. He re-ignited American confidence and optimism.

At the end of his presidency, Dad voiced only one regret: the deficit. As president, he couldn't cut the deficit because he lacked the line-item veto. When he became governor of California in 1966, the state was $1 billion in debt and spending $1 million more per day than it took in. Over the next eight years, he used the line-item veto 943 times to limit the spending of a Democratic-controlled legislature. He not only made California solvent again, he also gave taxpayers four tax rebates totaling $5 billion! With the line-item veto, he could have performed the same miracles in Washington.

Although my father is the one afflicted with

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Alzheimer's disease, I sometimes think the Republicans are suffering a much greater memory loss. They have forgotten Ronald Reagan's accomplishments—and that is why we have lost so many of them.

The tax burden on American families is greater today that at any other time in our history. This year Tax Freedom Day (the day on which our paychecks in effect have finally covered our taxes for the year and we start keeping what we earn) fell on May 9—the latest Tax Freedom Day in history. But while the American family groans under the tax burden, the Republican leadership announced that significant tax cuts were "off the table" and there would be no Republican agenda before the election of 2000. And what about the military, once restored by Reagan? The post-Cold War world is still a dangerous place—yet Republicans have struck a budget deal with Bill Clinton that guts defense, leaving our military forces weaker than at any time since Pearl Harbor.

"In eight short years, our government has largely repealed Reagan's revolution."
—Sen. Phil Gramm

It's time for conservatives to rediscover Ronald Reagan's vision of America as a "Shining City on a Hill." It's a vision of lower taxes, stronger families, limited government, and peace through strength. Ronald Reagan embodied all that was best in the American character: optimism, conviction, compassion, courage, and an unshakable faith in the power of freedom—free people, free markets, and freedom of opportunity.

Michael Reagan, the son of Ronald Reagan and Jane Wyman, is an author and the host of a nationally syndicated radio talk show.

—— Sen. Phil Gramm ——

Thirty-three years ago, Ronald Reagan delivered an address entitled "A Time for Choosing." In it, he said, "You and I have a rendezvous with destiny. We can preserve for our children this, the last best hope of man on earth, or we can sentence them to take the first step into a thousand years of darkness. If we fail, at least let our children and our children's children say of us we justified our brief moment here. We did all that could be done." Nobody remembers the title of this speech anymore; his ideas were so powerful that we know it today simply as "The Speech."

Ronald Reagan's legacy to us is encapsulated in these potent words, spoken in 1964 to an audience in Phoenix, Arizona. Reagan stood for less government and more freedom, and riveted people with the clarity of his vision. Ultimately, he made freedom such a clear choice over government that a tide of freedom swept our country and the world. The Evil Empire collapsed beneath the onslaught, and socialism everywhere fell into disrepute. He brought us peace and he brought us prosperity, and we have each reaped our own benefits. But as we stand on the brink of a new millennium, who among us can honestly say that we have done all we could?

In Reagan's great speech, he used facts and figures to make the case for freedom. He lamented, for example, a farm program that paid $43 a bushel for corn that wasn't grown. Well, we may not do that anymore, but can we say we've come a long way when the federal government today pays New York's teaching hospitals $38,000 for each doctor they don't train?

To make the point that government was too big and too powerful, he cited the U.S. Government Manual, which needed 520 pages to list the agencies of the executive branch of the federal government. You might be surprised to learn that today, even after four years of alleged reinventing and downsizing of the federal government, it now takes 649 pages to list them all.

Other things haven't changed, either. A child praying in a school cafeteria is still thought to constitute a danger to the public order, and American business is no less "harassed, bled, and even black-jacked under a preposterous crazy quilt of laws" than it was 33 years ago. In the years since Reagan left office, defense spending has plummeted, social spending has spiraled, and taxes have risen. In eight short years, our government has largely repealed Reagan's revolution.

In May 1997, Republicans who knew and admired President Reagan, who called themselves conservatives and who were a part of his revolution, found themselves discussing how to rejigger the calculation of the Consumer Price Index and of projected economic growth so they could make a deal with a Democratic president to spend more money.

Even three decades ago, Ronald Reagan understood all this. "If some among you fear taking a stand because you are afraid of reprisals from customers, clients, or even government, recognize that you are just feeding the crocodile hoping he'll eat you last." he said. Being eaten last isn't the rendezvous with destiny that I wish for my family and my country.

Phil Gramm, a Republican, is a U.S. senator from Texas.

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—— Ralph Reed ——

On the night that he said good-bye to his fellow Americans, Ronald Reagan told historians how they should remember him and conservatives how they should emulate him. Toward the end of his remarks before the 1992 Republican National Convention, Reagan said simply, "Whatever else history may say about me when I am gone, I hope it will record that I appealed to your best hopes, not your worst fears, to your confidence, rather that your doubts."

Ronald Reagan knew the kind of America he was working for. It would stand free of the threat of communism. It would recognize that the people *are* the government. It would erect no external obstacles to achievement and advancement. That was his "Shining City on the Hill."

Ronald Reagan truly believed in these things. They were not simply poll-tested and focus-grouped—they were core commitments. When he pledged to leave communism on the "ash heap of history" and said that sacrifices would have to be made to confront the Soviet threat, the Soviets believed him. When he told Members of Congress that the tax code needed reform, they listened to him. When he eloquently condemned the decline of morality and family that has frayed the nation's social fabric, millions responded. The American people know sincerity.

Ronald Reagan never seemed to doubt that the future would be brighter, that our best days are ahead of us. He made Americans believe that his dreams were their dreams. Like Reagan before us we face obstacles and opponents that sometimes seem insurmountable. We have endured slights and barbs and setbacks, but if our agenda appeals to the best of America, and if we believe in it, we have little to fear, much to gain, and the Gipper to thank.

Ralph Reed is the outgoing executive director of the Christian Coalition, based in Chesapeake, Virginia.

—— Elliott Abrams ——

Conservatives are abandoning several central features of the Reagan legacy. President Reagan was willing to use the power the electorate gave him. By contrast, conservatives in Congress are much too timid—in committee meetings, in dealing with nominees, in setting the legislative agenda, and in crafting necessary compromises with the Clinton administration.

Conservatives would also benefit from President Reagan's supreme confidence. Reagan always believed firmly that he represented the aspirations of the American people. This required a faith both in conservative principles and in their popularity among his fellow citizens. Conservatives today seem hobbled by doubts, if not about basic principles then about the value of explaining them to the public and enlisting its support.

On the international scene, Reagan knew that only America could lead the forces of freedom. He understood that this required a strong military and was willing to pay for it. Conservatives today are divided on this issue; although many recognize that the U.S. military has been cut far too much, few seem willing to fight for the resources that a capable military will require.

Finally, Reagan knew that leadership means challenging the prevailing political culture. As the governor who stood up to student radicals, as the candidate who challenged President Ford for the Republican nomination, as the president who deployed missiles in Europe, sent troops to Grenada, and described the Soviet Union as the "Evil Empire," he was often condemned and derided by liberals, the media, and the Republican Establishment. This did not deter him, for he did not, at his best, govern according to polls. If politics is the art of the possible, Reagan never underestimated what might be possible through strong leadership.

"Reagan always believed firmly that he represented the aspirations of the American people."
—Elliott Abrams

Today we miss most his notion of leadership, with its remarkable combination of practical political sense, self-confidence, and conviction that our country and its people would rise to the challenges we face if squarely asked to do so.

Elliott Abrams, the president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, in Washington, D.C., was President Reagan's assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs.

—— Gary Bauer ——

Ronald Reagan was a risk-taker. Conservatives must remember Reagan's boldness and be willing to take chances in order to revive and extend his legacy. Reagan built his career upon a set of ideas that were profoundly conservative. In so doing he repeatedly challenged the conventional wisdom, not only in the Washington establishment, but among many of his fellow Republicans and even his fellow conservative leaders. He boldly crossed the consensus thinking of his day on the Panama Canal,

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challenged the GOP's post-Watergate doldrums in 1976, seized the microphone during his pivotal debate with George Bush in the 1980 New Hampshire primary, endorsed a dramatic cut in personal income taxes, held his course during the 1982 recession, led a reluctant Western alliance to install intermediate-range missiles in Europe, and forged a strategy that he boldly predicted would leave the Soviet Union on the "ash heap of history."

Ronald Reagan never backed away from a position once he was convinced it was right. The most consistent criticism leveled at Reagan was, well, his consistency. Ronald Reagan used polls, but he was not driven by them. An accomplished rider, he never let the horse get in the saddle.

By the time his presidency was over, the top marginal tax rate had sunk from 70 percent to 28 percent, the personal exemption had been doubled and indexed for inflation, the energy industry had been deregulated, the Soviet Union was thwarted in Central America and tottering at home, and the nation had enjoyed six years of economic growth.

As Ronald Reagan handed over the reins of power in January 1989, he said that his greatest regret was that he had not been able to accomplish more to limit abortion. Conservatives today wince at the very mention of the word. Yet Reagan, the author of two landslide presidential victories, would never demur on such a fundamental issue. He spoke of the sanctity of human life with passion, not merely in targeted speeches to the Knights of Columbus or the Southern Baptist Convention, but on the national platform afforded by his State of the Union address.

Yes, Ronald Reagan was amiable. He was also eloquent. But most importantly, he had the courage to ignore the safe and conventional and to take the risk in fighting consistently for what he knew to be right. Conservatives today must recapture Reagan's belief that a bold vision is also a winning vision.

Gary Bauer, the president of the Family Research Council, in Washington, D.C., served as White House domestic policy adviser and as undersecretary of the U.S. Department of Education during the Reagan administration.

—— Gov. Frank Keating ——

The presidency was created by the Constitution, but it is up to the individual who occupies the office to define its true boundaries. Jefferson was the first to understand this. He commanded the office, took full possession of it with a confidence shared by few of his successors—and throughout it, he set a clear national agenda. So did Jackson, Lincoln, the two Roosevelts, and Ronald Reagan.

Reagan's achievement can be compared to Lincoln's, because he faced immense challenges in an era characterized by deep and fundamental philosophical divisions among the people he set out to lead. We often forget that Ronald Reagan, on January 20, 1981, faced the equivalent of a two-front war. The economy was in deep trouble. Soviet communism was threatening to burst out of its postwar stronghold in Eastern Europe with offensives in Africa, Afghanistan, and Central America. Americans were troubled and frightened.

As president, Ronald Reagan borrowed the spirit of FDR's declaration during an earlier time of trouble that we had "nothing to fear but fear itself," and within two years we were winning on all fronts. The economy boomed, partly through sensible economic policies, partly because Americans saw a leader with his sleeves rolled up and said, "We can do it, too." Within eight years, pressured by firm talk and firmer action, the Soviets were in disarray. Ronald Reagan was the lumberjack who patiently sawed away at the tree; if he was out of office when it fell, we all knew—the Soviets most of all—who was responsible for toppling the Evil Empire.

"Ronald Reagan never backed away from a position once he was convinced it was right."
—Gary Bauer

How did he do it?

First, he stated his principles, clearly, simply, unwaveringly. That's what made the liberals cringe. It's also what gave Americans such overwhelming confidence in the man. Americans are wise where it counts; they have an instinct for recognizing integrity, and given a clear choice between an honest man and a flimflam artist, they'll opt for the man with principles.

Second, the Reagan style relied on good humor and an "aw shucks" glint in the eye that said, "Let's not take ourselves too seriously." People respond to that. It was a welcome relief from the furrowed brows and clenched jaws of the Carter, Nixon, and Johnson administrations. We are not a grim people. Reagan was the Mark Twain of politics, able to make a point with a chuckle and a wry grin.

There has been much talk since the great conservative victories of 1994 about how we have lost our way, compromised too much, or misfired on the issues that really count. Maybe we started micromanaging policy issues again, as

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the liberals do, instead, of stating clear, basic principles like "lower taxes lead to growth" or "government is often the problem rather that the solution."

Go back and read Reagan's first Inaugural Address. He quoted from a diary found on the body of an American soldier named Martin Treptow who died in the First World War. It was a simple statement of his devotion to the cause of victory, and it said, "I will fight cheerfully . . . ." The winning fight is the cheerful fight, based on simple principles. If we remember that, we will always honor the legacy of Ronald Reagan, and we will prevail.

Frank Keating, the governor of Oklahoma, was an assistant secretary of the U.S. Treasury in the Reagan administration.

—— Sen. Trent Lott ——

More than once, President Reagan reminded conservatives that we do not have three separate agendas: one for the economy, one for social concerns, and one for the nation's security. Conservatives have one agenda: to restore the strength and greatness of the nation we love. All our efforts, legislative and political, are directed toward that one end. So whether we work for a new era of prosperity and opportunity, whether we strive to restore a family-based culture and respect for human life, whether we campaign for a missile-defense system, we are all laboring in the same vineyard. We need each other; we should trust one another. We want the same future for our country, a future open to all the potential of the century ahead but firmly rooted in all that was good in the past. So today's conservatives—indeed, all of my fellow Republicans—would do well to remind themselves periodically: One Agenda.

"Conservatives shrink from battling the forces that cheapen the value of the American family."
—Gov. David Beasley

The world is not a perfect place. That's why most progress must come incrementally, and by compromise. Sometimes moving toward our shared goals requires an indirect approach, and sometimes we have to take two steps forward and one step back. Though we may disagree about strategy at any particular point, we need not disagree over our final objectives. So we should keep our cool, keep our good humor, and keep faith with those who made it possible for us, today, to be in positions of leadership.

Trent Lott, a Republican from Mississippi, is the Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate.

—— Rep. Christopher Cox ——

Ronald Reagan led a revolution of ideas and spirit. In doing so, he infused not just conservatism but America itself with his own unlimited optimism. For pessimists, the world is full of obstacles. For optimists, like Reagan, the world was and is full of possibilities.

That optimism is what today's conservative leaders most need to recapture. Without it, the Republican party would still be looking backward to an earlier era. Politicians of both parties might still be managing the growth of the state at home, and the decline of American influence abroad. Instead, as a result of Ronald Reagan, the American people have come to expect policies designed to increase freedom and economic growth. Reagan always believed that America's best years lie ahead. By following his example, we can prove that he was right.

Christopher Cox, a Republican, represents the 47th District of California in the House of Representatives.

—— Gov. David Beasley ——

Nearly 10 years after he left office, the American people continue to agree with Ronald Reagan that this country will never be truly whole again until we restore our culture. Washington obsesses about dollar figures, but Americans believe the country's major problem is a decline in morals.

Conservatives in the post-Reagan era, however, frequently shrink from battling the forces that cheapen the value of the American family. It is as if we abandoned our principles in the face of a tenacious enemy. Some want only to talk Ronald Reagan's game. These *faux* conservatives permit economic policies—estate taxes and capital gains taxes—that hurt the family. They promote social policies that have yet to find one abortion worth stopping. And they wink at Hollywood and Madison Avenue as they coarsen our culture and poison our children's minds.

If we fail to confront the great moral issues of our day, we will forfeit the support of "Reagan Democrat" voters who are aching for principled leaders unafraid to promote the traditional family. I believe the Reagan Democrats, and many others, will respond if conservatives will find the courage of Reagan to simply say and do what we know to be true. Sticking by our principles means returning government to the states and returning real power to American families. We

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can do more for them than mandate the television V-chip.

We need conservatives who share Ronald Reagan's large vision for our society; who, as Reagan might say, can see beyond the front row. These conservatives—the real conservatives—have solid support from the American people. These conservatives have the moral obligation to continue, not betray, Ronald Reagan's timeless principles and vision.

David Beasley, a Republican, is the governor of South Carolina.

—— James C. Miller III ——

Conservatives should recall that Ronald Reagan's effectiveness stemmed from four things:

His single-minded adherence to a basic set of principles. He was willing to compromise on outcomes, but not on principles.

His communications skills, including the technique of teaching through parables. In cabinet meetings and in other settings, Reagan would make a point by telling some anecdote from his experience as head of the Screen Actors' Guild or as governor of California. The press made fun of him for repeating these stories, but he did so because his pupils often didn't get it the first time.

His refusal to take himself too seriously and his sense of humor. As he prepared to return to the private sector in 1989, he actually looked forward to giving up power. And who among those who observed him closely can forget his endless jokes and self-effacing quips?

His constancy in public and private. What you saw is what you got. I never heard him say anything in private that contradicted his public statements.

James C. Miller III, counselor for Citizens for a Sound Economy, was the director of the Office of Management and Budget under President Reagan.

—— Rep. Dick Armey ——

Ronald Reagan believed in freedom and responsibility—two ideas that are simple and yet powerful enough to change the world. That was the source of his strength; it must also be the source of ours.

He began after four decades of Keynesian confusion. Reagan ended the stagflation that had baffled four of his predecessors by applying generous doses of freedom to the economy. Tax cuts. Sound money. Free trade. Deregulation. What happened? America's been growing with stable prices ever since. Except for a brief pause during the reign of budget chief Dick Darman (whose tax hike is the exception that proves the rule) our economy has been steadily expanding at more than 3 percent a year since 1982, adding $2.3 trillion to our annual production. Without Ronald Reagan's freedom cure, we would today be as sclerotic as France or Sweden. Instead, our economy is the vibrant and dynamic envy of all the world (including our formerly smug friends in Japan). There is still no end in sight to the Reagan boom.

But liberty does not mean license, and Reagan knew that freedom requires a strong sense of personal responsibility. Ronald Reagan championed our nation's spiritual rebirth since that heyday of drugs and promiscuity known as the 1970s. We see this rebirth in the evangelical movement, rising volunteerism, new concern about values and character, and the near-consensus that Dan Quayle was absolutely right

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about Murphy Brown's fling with single motherhood. We are made in the image of God, and we have higher ends than to pursue money or pleasure or prestige for their own sake.

On the day he was inaugurated nearly 20 years ago, even Ronald Reagan would hardly dare imagine the world of boundless hope and opportunity these ideas would soon create. The rise of free markets and global trade means that hundreds of millions of people are now working together for their common betterment. Personal computers, digital technology, the World Wide Web—all are expanding the field of human creativity. There is a continuing American-led renaissance in science and the humanities. Certainly we face new ethical challenges—from smut on cable to Dolly the duplicate sheep—but the enduring strength of Ronald Reagan's own movement ensures we will be equal to them. Slouching to Gomorrah? Nonsense. There has never been a better time to be alive.

Dick Armey, a Republican from Texas, is the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives.

—— Rep. David McIntosh ——

When I think of Ronald Reagan and his legacy, the first word that comes to mind is freedom. Every word and every action of Reagan's presidency was dedicated to the protection of free people and free markets, both at home and abroad. While some political dealmakers today talk of tax cuts and smaller government as campaign promises, they do not always have Reagan's fundamental conviction about these policies. As a result, they are pale imitators of his leadership.

Reagan believed self-government was built on the rock-solid principle of freedom; with that belief, he overcame liberal opposition—the same opposition that conservatives in Congress face today. Reagan knew the American people cherished freedom as much as he did. This enabled him to win the political debate on his terms. Similarly, modern politicians must realize that they will succeed only by sharing Reagan's faith in the American people and in the soundness of conservative principles.

"Reagan's genius came from his ability to relate his deeply-felt principles to the everyday concerns of ordinary people."
—Rep. David McIntosh

In 1980, when Reagan was elected to office, America was in a state of fiscal and cultural malaise. Family paychecks were shrinking due to a combination of high taxes, high inflation, and high interest rates. Middle Eastern terrorists held Americans hostage and hard-line communists ruled the Soviet Union. Worst of all, the sovereignty of the American family was being usurped by the cumulative effect of New Deal and Great Society policies. Big Government had assumed control over the services Americans used to provide themselves and each other.

Despite this grim scenario, Reagan remained undaunted. He outlined exactly what he intended to accomplish and never, ever gave up the fight for lower taxes, smaller government, and a stronger national defense. He slashed marginal tax rates and economic growth soared. Per-capita disposable income increased nearly 20 percent between 1982 and 1990, giving American families their highest standard of living in decades. He stood firm against foreign dictators and America became a beacon of light on a tumultuous geopolitical landscape.

Liberals dismissed Reagan as an old B-movie actor playing the role of a president. They failed to grasp Reagan's genius in relating his deeply-felt principles to the real, everyday concerns of ordinary people. He could tap into their hopes and aspirations because his allegiance to the principle of freedom came straight from the heart, not from the latest public-opinion poll. Simply put, Americans believed Reagan cared because he did.

David McIntosh, a Republican, represents the 2nd district of Indiana in the House of Representatives. He was a White House aide for domestic affairs in the Reagan administration.

—— Jeane Kirkpatrick ——

During the presidential primary campaign of 1996 and through the general election, it was clear that many Republicans—candidates, staff, and commentators—had forgotten Ronald Reagan's 11th commandment: Thou shall not speak ill of another Republican. I believe Republicans' harsh, often malicious, attacks on Republican candidates did as much harm as Democrats.

Since the election, the Republican majority in the Congress sometimes seems more concerned with demonstrating that they can work with the White House than with legislating conservative principles. Ronald Reagan never preferred compromise to victory.

Jeane Kirkpatrick, the director of foreign policy and defense studies at the American Enterprise Institute, was President Reagan's ambassador to the United Nations.

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You've Come a Long Way, Daddy

After being pilloried and left for dead, the fatherhood ideal is making a comeback.

By Wade F. Horn

The greatest social tragedy of the last 30 years has been the collapse of fatherhood. Propelled by the twin engines of divorce and illegitimacy, the percentage of children growing up in a home without their father nearly tripled between 1960 and the early 1990s. By 1994, *24 million* American children were living without their biological fathers. But not to worry, we were increasingly told, all family arrangements were equal and children could do just fine without their fathers. Put simply, the modern family might need a village, but it no longer needed a dad.

Then something remarkable happened. Suddenly and unpredictably, fatherlessness began to be cited as the most disturbing and consequential social trend of our time. Soon, football stadiums were filling with Promise Keepers, busloads of African-American men were arriving in the nation's capital for a "Million Man March," and news stories began to highlight regularly the connection between absent fathers and such social ills as crime, educational failure, and welfare dependency. Some observers were even talking about the birth of a new social movement on behalf of fatherhood.

Collapse of Fatherhood

The retreat from fatherhood began in the 1960s, gained momentum in the 1970s, and hit full stride in the 1980s. Driving this collapse of fatherhood were three ideas about parenting, fathers, and children. Ideas do have consequences, and the cultural and social consequences of these ideas were profound. Moreover, these notions became so entrenched in American culture that, until recently, they obscured the obvious cause of so many social disorders: absentee fathers.

The myth of the androgyny ideal. For much of the history of Western civilization, differences

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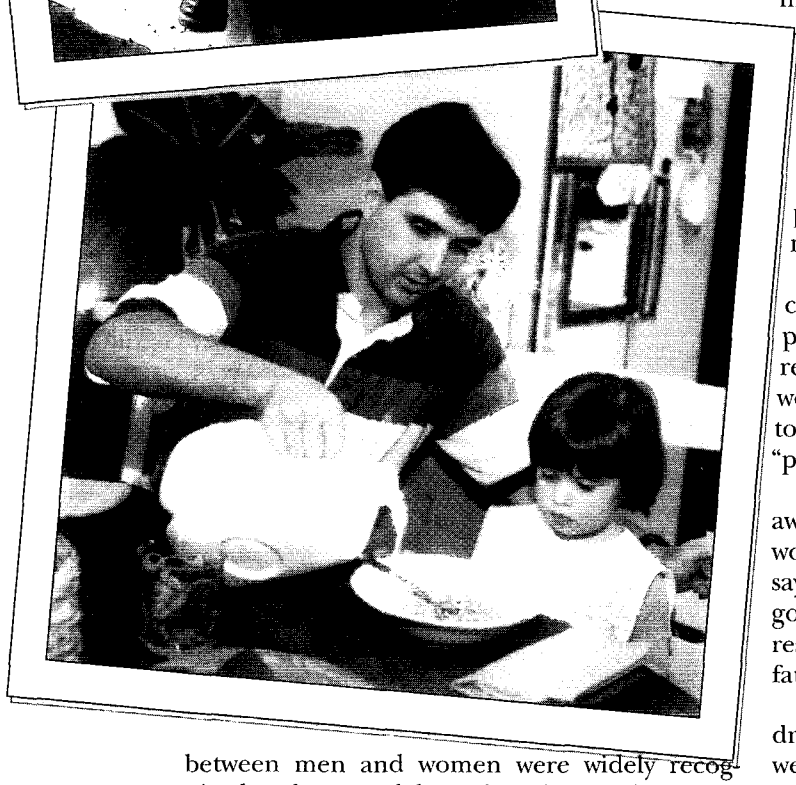

between men and women were widely recognized and even celebrated. As late as the 1950s, social scientists largely accepted that men and women had biological differences that produced behavioral differences. Men and women, it was thought, formed a natural complementarity wherein each sex supported and strengthened the other. This idea was so ingrained that, for much of this century, educators routinely reinforced male and female distinctiveness and sex-role behavior.

But beginning in the 1960s, our recognition of gender distinctiveness gave way to the ideal of androgyny. Out of a concern for greater social equity, androgyny advocates preached that men and women ought not only to be treated exactly the same, but to behave the same as well. Social psychologist Sandra Bem was particularly influential in spreading the gospel of androgyny, arguing that persons freed from traditional sex-role behavior would be better adjusted, more adaptive, and psychologically healthier. By 1980, according to a survey published in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 72 percent of mental-health professionals described a "healthy, mature, socially competent" adult as androgynous.

The ideal of androgyny found fertile soil in the field of parenting advice. Experts jettisoned the complementary model of childrearing and exhorted mothers and fathers each to parent in exactly the same way. According to many parenting gurus of the 1970s and 1980s, mothers and fathers should parent so that a child would neither know nor care whether it was mom or dad in the room.

Androgyny became the basis of the New Nurturing Father ideal, in which a good father was defined as a man who shares equally in all childrearing activities from the moment of birth. The New Nurturing Father was expected not only to cry at movies, but to change precisely half the diapers and fix his baby's formula as adeptly as he could fix a flat tire.

This view is now deeply ingrained in American culture—especially among social-service providers. At a recent workshop I conducted on restoring fatherhood, I was lectured by a social worker that it is not just incorrect, but *dangerous*, to use the word "father." The correct term is "parent."

The androgynous father has proven to be an awfully uninspiring model for most men. And no wonder. Essentially, the androgynous message says, "Fathers, you are doing it wrong. To be a good father, you must be more like mother." The result: fatherhood has been feminized, and the father is disappearing from the home.

The myth of the superfluous father. Once androgyny advocates established that most fathers were "doing it wrong," it became relatively easy to argue fathers were not really necessary to the "modern" family. Social scientists began to assert that there was a "nuclear family bias" in past research, and exhorted fellow researchers and practitioners to stop extolling the importance of a father—even a New Nurturing Father—to the well-being of children. By 1982, psychologist Charlotte Patterson of the University of Virginia felt assured enough to state flatly, "Children don't need a father to develop normally."

Spurred on by radical feminist rhetoric, exemplified by Gloria Steinem's quip that "a woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle,"

Photos by Mike Doyle / The National Center for Fathering

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some even began to assert that children actually did *better* without fathers. In a 1982 study of father-absent households published in the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, Barbara Cashion claimed that girls growing up without fathers are more independent, have higher IQs, and enjoy higher self-esteem than girls growing up with fathers. This, according to Cashion, is because "[t]he two-parent family is hierarchical with mother and father playing powerful roles and children playing subordinate roles. In the female-headed family there is no such division. Women and children forgo much of the hierarchy and share more in their relationships. . . . There is a general lack of conflict, and decisions are made more easily and quickly."

The advocacy on behalf of this idea of the superfluous father had its intended effect. By 1994, 35 percent of men between 18 and 29 years old, and 62 percent of women in the same age group, agreed with the statement, "One parent can bring up a child as well as two parents." Indeed, by hearing repeatedly that they are at best superfluous and at worst detrimental to the well-being of children, men could now claim they were doing their children a *favor* by leaving them solely in the hands of the mother.

The myth of resilient children. A final idea that contributed to the decline of fatherhood in America was that children are resilient. For much of human history, children have been seen as requiring tenderness, affection, and protection from the adult world. This view of childhood as a time of innocence and vulnerability led to the prevailing cultural virtue that parents in troubled marriages ought to stay together "for the sake of the kids." This does not mean that divorce is a recent invention; indeed, divorce has been a part of mankind's experience throughout human history. But it did place a natural braking mechanism on impulses to leave one's spouse, which helped to keep divorce rates relatively low.

As pointed out by Barbara Dafoe Whitehead in her recent book *The Divorce Culture*, this view of childhood posed a problem for the divorce advocates in the 1970s. If children were vulnerable to stress and disruption, how does one divorce without feeling guilty? The answer: Children are really more resilient than we think. Divorce, and its consequent father absence, may be painful at first, but the children will get over it. They are, after all, just children.

Some even went further to suggest that divorce can be a self-actualizing experience for children. In their 1974 book *The Courage To Divorce*, authors Susan Gettleman and Janet Markowitz argued that "divorce can liberate children," and can lead to "greater insight and freedom as adults in deciding whether and when to marry" and to "break away from excessive dependency on their biological parents." Similarly, in his 1973 book *Creative Divorce: A New Opportunity for Personal Growth*, therapist Mel Krantzler stated that divorce provides "an ambiguous, expanded experience that moves kids to better adjustment in a society that is highly ambiguous and expanded."

The propagation of the "resilient child" myth was extraordinarily successful. By 1977, 80 percent of respondents to a national survey disagreed with the statement, "When there are children in the family, parents should stay together even if they don't get along." Divorce rates nearly tripled between 1960 and the early 1980s, as adults found a way to avoid their guilt about walking away from unsatisfying marriages. Today, nearly a million children a year experience the "liberating effects" of divorce.

Turning the Tide

Beginning in the early 1980s, social scientists began to compile evidence that would fundamentally challenge these three myths about parenting, fathers, and children. First, developmental psychologists discovered that mothers and fathers do approach parenting somewhat differently, and that these differences may be beneficial to a child's development. Rather than finding support for the notion that androgynous parenting was the ideal way to raise children, researchers found that some degree of parenting specialization was helpful.

For example, researchers consistently found that mothers tend to be more verbal in their interactions with their children, fathers more physical. That is, mothers like to talk to their babies, whereas fathers like to play with them. During the height of the androgyny era, childrearing experts often asserted that the physical play of fathers—so-called rough-and-tumble play—was superfluous to childrearing. Consequently, many parenting experts of the time exhorted fathers to stop playing with the kids and do more housework. Some even asserted that the rough-and-tumble play of fathers taught children aggression.

Every year, nearly a million American children experience the "liberating effects" of divorce.

But research increasingly found that physical play with fathers gives children practice in understanding how to regulate their own behavior and helps them learn to recognize the emotional cues of others—two hallmarks of a properly socialized child. Researchers also found that young

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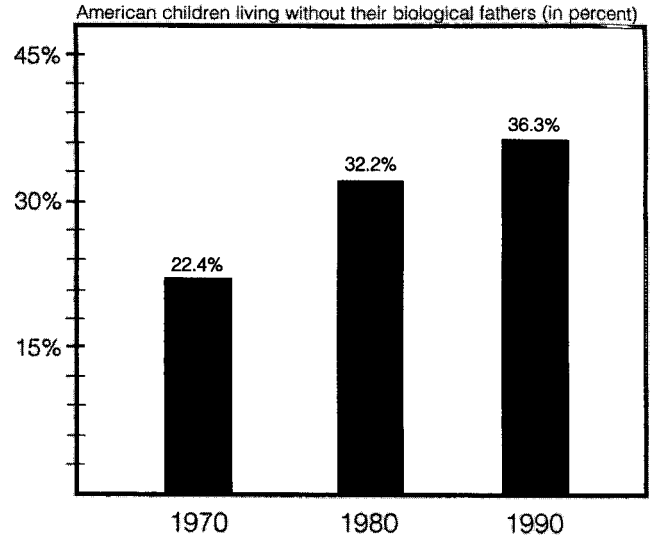
The Father Famine

The proportion of U.S. children growing up without their fathers has jumped by more than 60 percent since the 1970s.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

children need lots of verbal stimulation to develop the language centers of their brains. Hence dads' style of parenting helps children develop self-regulation, while that of moms helps children acquire language skills.

Social scientists also discovered that mothers tend to be stronger comforting figures and fathers stronger disciplinarians. Since research has consistently shown that children do best when reared with a combination of emotional warmth and behavioral control, they depend for their well-being on a combination of mothers' nurturance and fathers' discipline. The complementary nature of two-parent families was making a comeback.

At the same time that developmental psychologists were rediscovering the uniqueness of fathers, social demographers and family-policy analysts were re-discovering their importance. Over the past decade, a voluminous body of data has documented the ill effects of growing up without a father. Fatherless children, for example, were found to be three times more likely to fail at school, two to three times more likely to experience emotional or behavioral problems requiring psychiatric treatment, and three times more likely to commit suicide as adolescents. Fatherless children were also five times more likely to be poor. But poverty alone failed to explain the increased risk of poor outcomes associated with growing up without fathers. Even after controlling for income, children with absent fathers fared worse than those who grew up with both a mom and a dad.

As fathers were found to be more vital than previously thought, children were also discovered to be more vulnerable. Beginning with the groundbreaking work of psychologist Judith Wallerstein, clinical researchers began to document that divorce or abandonment inflicts upon children not just temporary strain, but long-term emotional and behavioral harm. Far from being resilient, children were found to suffer forever when they don't live in forever families.

By the early 1990s, these research findings found their way into the conclusions and recommendations of several widely disseminated and influential studies of family policy. One of the earliest of these was "Putting Children First: A Progressive Family Policy for the 1990s," published in 1990 by the Progressive Policy Institute, a think tank affiliated with the Democratic Leadership Council. Authored by Elaine C. Kamarck and William A. Galston, both of whom later took high-ranking positions within the Clinton administration, the report argued that the most consequential factor in the decline of children's well-being was the collapse of the American family. The report identified father absence as a primary culprit and recommended ways to bolster the two-parent family by strengthening marriage and making divorce less common.

The following year, the National Commission on Children released its final report, "Beyond Rhetoric: A New American Agenda for Children and Families." Relying heavily upon Kamarck and Galston, this report asserted that "[c]hildren do best when they have the personal involvement and material support of a father and a mother and when both parents fulfill their responsibility to be loving providers." Even more remarkably, the report concluded that "[t]here can be little doubt that having both parents living and working together in a stable marriage can shield children from a variety of risk. Rising rates of divorce, out-of-wedlock childbearing, and absent parents are not just manifestations of alternative lifestyles, they are patterns of adult behavior that increase children's risk of negative consequences."

The Birth of a Movement

Despite this accumulating evidence, nothing remotely resembling a fatherhood movement, or even a "fatherhood consciousness," had yet appeared. This changed dramatically as a result of 39 words uttered by a public figure widely perceived at the time to be an intellectual lightweight: Vice President Dan Quayle.

On May 19, 1992, while campaigning for reelection, Quayle made a speech at the Commonwealth Club of California, in San Francisco, dur-

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ing which he said, "It doesn't help matters when prime-time TV has Murphy Brown—a character who supposedly epitomizes today's intelligent, highly paid, professional woman—mocking the importance of fathers by bearing a child alone and calling it just another 'lifestyle choice.'"

Quayle may not have intended to inspire a national fatherhood movement, but his speech and the reaction that followed galvanized others to defend his larger point: that fathers matter to the well-being of children and that society experiments with father absence at its peril. The first of these spirited defenses was an extraordinarily influential article published in the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine by social historian Barbara Dafoe Whitehead. In "Dan Quayle Was Right," Whitehead laments that "every time the issue of family structure has been raised, the response has been first controversy, then retreat, and finally silence." Undaunted, she continues: "How do we begin to reconcile our long-standing belief in equality and diversity with an impressive body of evidence that suggests that not all family structures produce equal outcomes for children?. . . How do we uphold the freedom of adults to pursue individual happiness in their private relationships and at the same time respond to the needs of children for stability, security, and permanence in their family lives?"

The themes laid out in Whitehead's article were further refined and expanded in a series of compelling articles and books, including *Life Without Father*, by David Popenoe; *New Expectations: Community Strategies for Responsible Fatherhood*, by James Levine and Edward Pitt; *FatherLove*, by Richard Louv; and especially *Fatherless America*, by David Blankenhorn. Particularly influential was a *Wall Street Journal* article by Charles Murray entitled "The Coming White Underclass." Murray dramatically and compellingly broadened the perception of father absence from merely a "black family problem" to one that was quickly encompassing all of American society.

Seventy-nine percent of Americans believe the "most significant family or social problem facing America is the physical absence of the father from the home."

These writings, in turn, spawned a renewed interest in programmatic activity on the fatherhood issue, including skill-building initiatives, outreach programs for unwed fathers, and public advocacy. Among the most important of these efforts is the National Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Development, headed by Charles Ballard. Toiling for more than a decade in inner-city Cleveland, this program deploys men from the local community to work with young unwed fathers, many of whom have either dropped out of school, are unemployed, or have substance-abuse problems. Using a combination of parenting skills, education, and faith, this program has been extraordinarily effective in encouraging young, mostly unwed, fathers to re-enter the lives of their children and to support the mothers.

Another innovative fatherhood program that soon garnered national attention was MADDADS. Headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska, this program began one spring evening in 1989 when the 20-year-old son of John L. Foster staggered home, badly beaten, blood streaming down his face. When Foster, a 45-year-old African American, found out his son had been beaten by a gang of teenagers, he loaded his .357 magnum and took to the streets looking for the culprits. Luckily, he didn't find the gang of kids that had beaten his son, but that night he did have an epiphany: "I was literally a *mad dad* and I knew I wanted to organize strong black men who were willing to stand up and fight this thing." The first man he recruited was Eddie Staton, and the two of them decided that they had had enough of drug dealers, crack addicts, and prostitutes in their neighborhood. Soon they had organized a group of nearly 100 black men who began "father street patrols" to remove graffiti and rid their neighborhood of lowlifes. Today, MADDADS claims 30,000 members in 49 chapters in 14 states, and its mission has been expanded to include outreach to young fathers and mentoring of fatherless children.

Another, and by far the largest, fatherhood promotion effort is Promise Keepers. Begun in 1990 by former University of Colorado football coach Bill McCartney, Promise Keepers seeks to inspire men to be faithful husbands and responsible fathers within a servant-leader model of marriage. The message is clearly striking a responsive chord. The first gathering in 1991 drew 4,000 men; the next year 22,000 attended. By 1996, nearly 1.1 million men were attending Promise Keepers events at 22 stadiums around the country. Promise Keepers headquarters now has a full-time staff of more than 400, and an annual budget of nearly $100 million. In 1995, a similar mass gathering of fathers, the Million Man March, brought nearly three-quarters of a million black men together to celebrate their obligations to family (although it appears not to have enjoyed the lasting influence of Promise Keepers).

In addition to these individual efforts to reinvigorate fatherhood, there emerged an increas-

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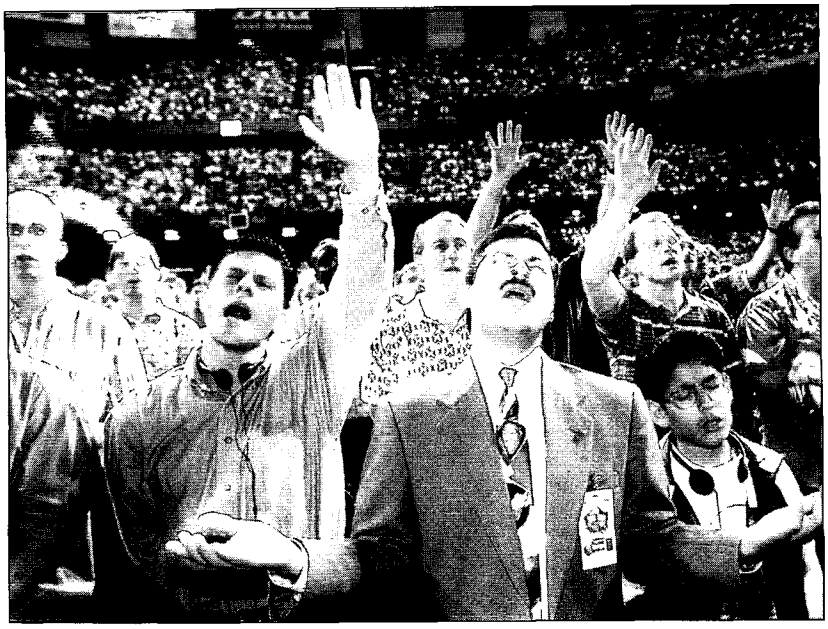
ing interest on the part of fatherhood advocates, researchers, analysts, and programmers to come together and seek common cause. These reformers first united under a single fatherhood banner at the National Summit on Fatherhood in Dallas, Texas, in October 1994. Hosted by the newly formed National Fatherhood Initiative, this gathering attracted more than 200 fatherhood advocates, researchers and public-policy analysts, education and skill building experts, advocates for low-income fathers, and religious leaders. Other gatherings followed, including an Interfaith Summit on Fatherhood, several state-wide, governor-sponsored conferences, and a meeting in October 1996 in Minneapolis at which participants endorsed a statement of principle for the fatherhood movement, entitled "A Call to Fatherhood."



At Promise Keeper rallies nationwide, men by the tens of thousands are pledging devotion to God and to their wives and families.

Photo courtesy of Promise Keepers

Today, there are literally dozens of national groups advocating on behalf of fatherhood and hundreds more providing local support, encouragement, and skill-building programs targeted at fathers. The National Fatherhood Initiative, for example, conducts national and state-wide public education programs building awareness of the irreplaceable contributions that fathers make to the well-being of children; organizes local fatherhood forums; and operates a National Clearinghouse and Resource Center, which provides training and technical assistance to local organizations to implement a fatherhood program.

The National Centers for Fathering, headquartered in Kansas City, conducts seminars for men on how to be more effective dads and provides training to help social-service agencies meet the needs of fathers. The National Centers on Fathers and Families, based at the University of Pennsylvania, conducts research on programs that encourage the effective involvement of fathers. And the Fatherhood Project of the Families and Work Institute, located in New York City, provides information to employers on how they can make their workplaces more father-friendly.

There are signs that this new "fatherhood movement" is starting to have an impact. Surveys indicate that increasing numbers of Americans are getting the fatherhood message. A 1996 Gallup Poll found that 79 percent of Americans believe "the most significant family or social problem facing America is the physical absence of the father from the home," up from 69 percent in 1992. Another recent survey found that 84 percent of men in their 30s and 40s agree that the definition of success is being a good father.

There is even evidence that this shift in attitudes is beginning to translate into behavioral change. Since the mid-1980s, the divorce rate has been decreasing. And last year, for the first time in two decades, the percentage of children born out of wedlock actually declined by half a percentage point. Families once again are making room for daddy.

Challenges Ahead

Still, challenges remain. Tonight, nearly 40 percent of all children in America will go to bed in a home without their father available to read them a bedtime story, bring them a glass of water, and give them a goodnight kiss. Many millions more live with disconnected, neglectful, and sometimes even abusive, fathers.

Furthermore, there is no guarantee that, even after accepting the importance of fathers, we will head in the right direction. Many observers, while agreeing that fathers are important, say that we must accept the realities of out-of-wedlock childbearing and divorce, and work instead to ensure that children receive financial support from their nonresident fathers. Their solution is that we become more efficient at establishing paternity and help nonresident fathers find employment so that they can meet their child-support obligations.

Establishing paternity and enforcing child support are, of course, not without merit. And a just and good society ought to do all it can to increase job opportunities in low-income communities. But an emphasis on child support ignores the many noneconomic contributions that fathers make to the well-being of their children. Indeed, emphasizing fatherhood in largely economic terms has helped to contribute to its

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demise. After all, if a father is little more than a paycheck to his children, he can easily be replaced by a welfare payment.

If we want fathers to be more than just money machines, we will need a culture that supports their work as nurturers, disciplinarians, mentors, moral instructors, and skill coaches, and not just as economic providers. To do otherwise is to effectively downgrade fathers to, in the words of Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "paper dads."

Others suggest cohabitation as the solution to fatherlessness. In part driven by the younger generation's simultaneous desire for intimacy and fear of divorce, cohabitation as a form of "trial marriage" is one of the fastest-growing family forms. Among 25- to 34-year-olds, the percentage of cohabiting couples in which children are present increased from 34 percent in 1980 to 47 percent in 1993. Overall, 2.2 million children (roughly one in seven) currently reside in cohabiting families.

We have to convince men to delay fathering children until after they have established a committed and enduring marriage.

But cohabitation before marriage actually makes subsequent marriages *less* stable. In fact, divorce rates for couples who cohabit before marriage are higher than for those who did not. Thus, the very solution toward which many in the younger generation have gravitated in order to solidify long-term relationships is, in reality, likely to weaken them.

Cohabitation is also unlikely to produce lifetime dads for children. Although a quarter of nonmarital births occur to cohabiting couples, six out of 10 cohabiting couples never go on to marry, and those who do are more likely to get divorced than those couples who bear children within marriage. For many children of cohabiting couples, dads are likely to become—at best—only occasional visitors.

Fatherhood and Marriage

Although it is becoming increasingly popular to speak of the importance of fathers to the well-being of children, it is still out of fashion to speak of the importance of marriage to the well-being of fatherhood. Yet research has consistently found that unmarried fathers, whether through divorce or out-of-wedlock fathering, tend over time to become disconnected, both financially and psychologically, from their children. About 40 percent of children in father-absent homes have not seen their father in at least a year. Of the remaining 60 percent, only one in five sleeps even one night per month in the father's home. Overall, only one in six sees their father an average of once or more per week. More than half of all children who don't live with their fathers have never even been in their father's home.

Consequently, there is a growing chorus of voices within the fatherhood movement singing the praises of marriage as the solution to the fatherhood problem. The National Fatherhood Initiative in particular advocates the promotion of marriage as a means of promoting fatherhood. For example, together with the Hudson Institute we recently published a report on fathers and welfare reform, which argued that low-income men are unlikely to be responsible fathers unless state policies make low-income men more attractive marital partners. States can do this by admitting them to job-placement programs and granting preference to married couples in the distribution of certain welfare benefits in limited supply, such as slots in public housing and Head Start. The National Fatherhood Initiative will soon implement a national monitoring project to find out what states and local communities are doing to promote marriage and fatherhood within the context of welfare reform.

This does not mean that all marriages are made in heaven; it does not even mean that nonresident fathers cannot be good dads. But based on the evidence, the inescapable conclusion is this: If we want to increase the number of children growing up with involved and committed fathers, we will have to convince men to delay fathering children until after they have established a committed and enduring marriage.

The Beginning of the End . . . Perhaps

The good news is our culture is re-awakening to the idea that fathers are important to the well-being of their children. Men are increasingly likely to aspire to be loving, committed, and responsible fathers. And there does seem to be a fatherhood movement emerging in America. But, at the same time, millions of children still live without their fathers or with dads who are all but absent. And too many men persist in believing that marriage and involved fatherhood have little to do with each other.

The battle for fatherhood, therefore, while encouraging, is far from over. In 1942, after the allies had won the battle for North Africa, Winston Churchill cautioned his countrymen, "Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning." So it may be with fatherhood in America.

Wade F. Horn *is the president of the National Fatherhood Initiative, based in Gaithersburg, Maryland.*

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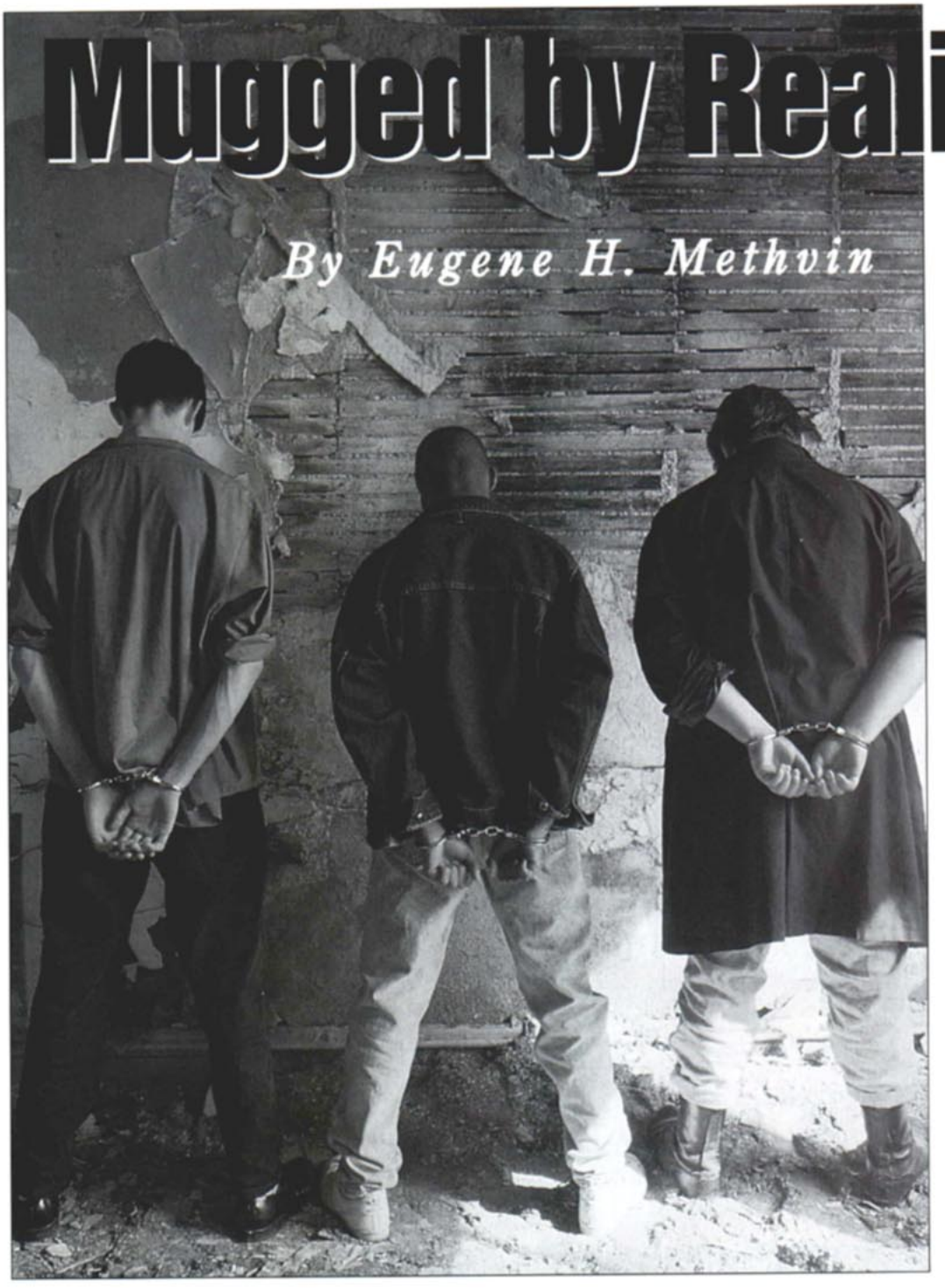
In the 30 years since Congress first established a federal agency for the study of crime, we have spent millions of dollars on criminological studies. That investment is finally bearing fruit. Aided by powerful new computers crunching reams of data, social scientists have learned a lot about criminal careers, how they develop, and how society can thwart them.

Mugged by Reality

By Eugene H. Methvin



Nine lessons we

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The most serious offenders against people and property in this country generally hit their criminal peak between 16 and 18 years of age. The hard-core young thug-to-be starts stealing from mama's purse before he's 10. By the fourth and fifth grades, he is skipping school. As he enters his teens, he's gangbanging—and on the track to prison or an early violent death. Typically he is committing burglaries at about 15, armed robberies at 16, and often killing by 18—and sometimes much younger. After years of effort to contain the crime committed by these hoodlums, we know what works and what doesn't. At long last, we have all the knowledge we need to design an effective strategy for the prevention of crime.

1. Most serious crime is committed by a violent minority of predatory recidivists.

Criminologist Marvin Wolfgang compiled records of all of the 9,945 males born in 1945 and attending school in Philadelphia between the ages of 10 and 18. A mere 627—just under 7 percent—were chronic offenders, with five or more arrests by age 18. These so-called Dirty Seven Percenters committed more than half of all offenses and two-thirds of the violent crimes, including all the murders, that were committed by the entire cohort.

Wolfgang followed his "Class of '45" through its 30th year in 1975. Shockingly few offenders were incarcerated. Even the 14 murderers among them spent an average of only four years behind bars for these crimes. Worse, these hard-core criminals admitted in interviews that, for each arrest, they typically got away with 8 to 11 other serious crimes. Wolfgang found that 70 percent of juveniles arrested three times committed a fourth offense; of those, 80 percent not only committed a fifth offense, but kept at it through 20 or more. If the city's judges had sent each Dirty Seven Percenter to prison for just a year after his *third* offense, Wolfgang calculated, Philadelphians would have suffered 7,200 fewer serious crimes while they off the streets.

arned about the epidemic of crime—and what to do about it.

Wolfgang's findings electrified the law-enforcement world. At the request of U.S. Attorney General Edward Levi, Wolfgang repeated the study on the 13,160 Philadelphian males born in 1958. The proportion of chronic offenders was virtually the same: 982 young men (7.5 percent) collected five or more arrests before age 18. But the crimes committed by the "Class of '58" were bloodier and far more frequent. Compared with the Class of '45, these youths were twice as likely to commit rape and aggravated assault, three times more likely to murder, and five times more likely to commit robbery. They were, concluded Wolfgang, "a very violent criminal population of a small number of nasty, brutal offenders. They begin early in life and should be controlled equally early."

Other studies with different methodologies corroborated Wolfgang's approximate finding of 7 percent in places as different as London; Copenhagen; Orange County, California; Racine, Wisconsin; Columbus, Ohio; Phoenix, Arizona; and Salt Lake City, Utah.

2. A minority of this minority is extraordinarily violent, persistent, or both.

They are "Super Predators," far more dangerous than the rest. Researchers for Rand questioned 2,190 prisoners convicted of robbery in California, Texas, and Michigan. Nearly all admitted to many more crimes than those for which they were jailed. But a tiny fraction of these career criminals proved to be *extraordinarily* frequent offenders. The least active 50 percent of burglars averaged a little under six burglaries a year, while the most prolific 10 percent averaged more than 230. The least active 50 percent of the robbers committed five robberies a year on average, but the top 10 percent averaged 87. The distribution of drug-dealing offenses was even more skewed: Half of these convicts did 100 deals a year on average, while the highest tenth averaged 3,251.

Sociologist Delbert S. Elliott of the University of Colorado has tracked a nationally representative sample of 1,725 boys and girls who were between 11 and 17 years old in 1976. By 1989, 369 of them had committed one or more serious, violent offenses. But only 32 were high-rate offenders. Year after year, those in this small group committed an average of 30 violent crimes each and hundreds of lesser crimes. Just under 2 percent of the whole, they accounted for half the serious crimes committed by the entire group. These Super Predators distinguish themselves by their arrest records, by the early age at which they first tangle with the law, and by the seriousness of their early offenses. Nationally, we can crudely estimate the current crop of young "super felons" at about 500,000 of our 26.7 million 11- to 17-year-olds.

3. Most of these persistent predators are criminal psychopaths, and we now have a scientifically valid instrument to identify them with reasonable accuracy.

Psychopaths are responsible for more than

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half of all serious crimes. The normal criminal has an internalized set of values, however warped, and he feels guilt whenever he violates his standards. The psychopath doesn't even know what guilt is, because he has never experienced it. But he is good at *faking* it.

Even within prison populations, psychopaths stand out because their anti-social and illegal behavior is more varied and frequent than that of ordinary criminals. In prisons and mental hospitals, they are generally the nastiest inmates. They are more resistant to treatment, more likely to try to escape, and more violent with other inmates and the staff. After they are released, they re-offend at four to five times the rate of other criminals. Psychopaths constitute an estimated 1 to 2 percent of the population—and 20 to 25 percent of our prison population. This means the United States has at least *2 million* psychopaths.

After 25 years of research, psychologist Robert D. Hare of the University of British Columbia developed a reliable instrument for diagnosing psychopathy: the Hare Psychopathy Check List. After interviewing relatives and associates and studying criminal and other records, a trained clinician interviews the subject and scores him on 20 personality traits and behaviors characteristic of this personality disorder. Is the person glib, manipulative, a liar, sexually promiscuous, grandiose in his sense of self-worth, impulsive, averse to boredom, incapable of remorse? Was he trouble from an early age? Does he have a juvenile and adult arrest record? Has he had many short-term marital relationships? And so on.

Hare, in his 1993 book *Without Conscience: The Disturbing World of Psychopaths Among Us*, says: "Psychopaths are social predators who charm, manipulate, and ruthlessly plow their way through life, leaving a broad trail of broken hearts, shattered expectations, and empty wallets. Completely lacking in conscience and feelings for others, they selfishly take what they want and do as they please, violating social norms and expectations without the slightest sense of guilt or regret."

"The way to reduce prison populations," says one criminologist, is to punish offenders with "increasingly severe and certain sanctions" from their first offense.

Studies of Canadian and American convicts released from prison show that only about 20 percent of the low scorers on the PCL are re-arrested within three years, but 80 percent of the high scorers end up back behind bars.

The PCL can be a powerful tool for prison administrators, parole boards, judges, and others who must cope with this extraordinarily destructive population. High scorers are poor risks for probation or parole and good candidates for maximum sentences in higher security institutions. Maryland prison officials have used the PCL to assess some 10,000 inmates. It has enabled them to divert low scorers from costly maximum-security facilities into lower-cost units or parole, freeing up 1,100 prison beds a day, which yields $19.8 million in savings a year. Moreover, the state has avoided an estimated $55 million in new prison construction. Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and most American states are now using the PCL in their prison systems.

4. Savvy police, prosecutors, and judges can identify and isolate high-rate violent predators.

In Miami, sociologist James A. Inciardi used a "snowballing" interview technique to find them. He sent researchers into high-crime neighborhoods to talk to youngsters about "who's doing drugs" and "who's into crime." They found 611 youngsters ages 12 to 17 who admitted to multiple crimes and repeated drug use. Ninety percent of them had been arrested, an equal proportion had been thrown out of school, and almost half had been incarcerated. Typically they began to use alcohol at age seven and turned to crime and drugs at 11; almost two-thirds had participated in a robbery by the age of 13. The interviewees confessed to a total of 429,136 criminal acts during the year prior to their interviews—more than 700 each, or nearly two a day. Of these acts, 18,477, or 30 apiece, were major felonies, including 6,269 robberies and 721 assaults. Nearly 18 percent had committed armed robberies, as young as 14, and 90 percent carried weapons most of the time. Among this violent crowd, 361 committed the 6,269 robberies—an average of 17 each—and two-thirds of them robbed before the age of 13.

If sociologists can find the Super Predators, police can, too. William Bratton proved it, first in New York City's subway system in 1990, then citywide after Mayor Rudolph Giuliani named him police commissioner in 1994. By 1990, the New York subway had become a lawless jungle. Riders were deserting by the tens of thousands. An estimated 180,000 fare evaders jumped the turnstiles every day, costing the system $65 million a year. Vandals jammed coin slots and opened exit doors; aggressive panhandlers threatened riders on the cars; muggers stole their tokens and money. Violent teenagers prowled the subways in "wolfpacks."

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As the chief of New York's 4,000 transit police officers, Bratton created strategies for winnowing out the criminal minority. He ordered uniformed officers to enforce all subway rules. He planted plainclothes teams to arrest fare evaders. Each of them was searched; one in 14 was arrested for packing illegal guns, and one out of seven was wanted on previous criminal warrants. Whenever detectives caught one mugger, they extracted information about other wolfpack members. They also tracked down a group of about 75 hard-core graffiti vandals. Bratton insisted that his officers act on bench warrants for subway crimes within 24 hours. Their apprehension rate rose sharply to more than 60 percent. The hunters became the hunted. Bratton's strategies cut subway crime by two-thirds—and robberies by three-fourths. Fare evaders were reduced by two-thirds, too. Riders returned by the ten of thousands. By 1994 New York's subways were the scene of fewer than 20 felonies a day, down 64 percent in five years.

Named in 1994 to head the whole police department, Bratton and his deputy commissioner, Jack Maple, implemented a strategy of "relentless pursuit." Bratton personally urged officers to cite citizens for "quality of life" offenses such as drinking beer in public, smoking marijuana, or urinating in the street, and to frisk offenders for illegal weapons at the slightest suspicion. Maple launched a campaign to remind officers to interrogate every arrestee. Talented interrogators created a three-day "verbal judo" course at the police academy to teach officers how to extract information from suspects. New York's cops responded enthusiastically, and with dramatic results. A topless dancer arrested for prostitution fingered the bouncer at her Brooklyn club in an unsolved murder. A car thief turned in a fence, who then turned in a father-son gun-dealing team. A parolee arrested for failing to report turned out to have been the only eyewitness to a drug-related murder.

This campaign produced "a miracle happening before our eyes," says Jeffrey Fagan, the director of Columbia University's Center for Violence Research and Prevention. From 1994 to 1996, New York City's murders declined by 49 percent, robberies 43 percent, burglaries 39 percent, and grand larcenies 32 percent. In 1995, the city accounted for 70 percent of the heralded national decline in serious crimes.

6. The rehabilitation ideal of the juvenile-court system leads to costly coddling of serious and persistent offenders.

Studies show that youths who land in juvenile court a second time will likely become chronic offenders. Howard N. Snyder, a researcher with the National Council of Family and Juvenile Court Judges, analyzed the records of 48,311 boys who went through juvenile courts in Utah and Arizona. More than half never returned after the first trip. But most of those who landed in court a second time before their 16th birthdays became persistent repeaters, and the earlier their first prosecution, the more likely they were to be violent chronics.

It is important to note that a troublesome youngster typically has 10 or 12 contacts with the criminal-justice system and many more undiscovered offenses before he ever receives any formal "adjudication," or finding of guilt, from a judge. He quickly concludes that he will never face any serious consequences for his delinquency. For each young chronic offender who comes before him, a juvenile-court judge typically moves toward more severe punishments and costly interventions in five or more small steps. Snyder recommends that judges impose upon second-time convicts stiffer penalties and the more intense (and costly) rehabilitation programs. Waiting until the fourth or fifth offense to do so only wastes court time and money—and looses serious crime upon the public.

Criminologists have found that hard-core repeat offenders get away with a dozen or more serious crimes for every arrest.

In Richmond, Virginia, a juvenile-court psychologist estimated that court costs, rehabilitation efforts, and incarceration for just 14 defendants who cycled through her court regularly totaled more than $2 million. Welfare, food stamps, court-appointed lawyers, and other services over the years swelled their cost to taxpayers to more than $5 million. She tracked 56 young men locked in the youth-detention center over one five-day period. On average, they were 15 years old and had compiled 12 arrests apiece for crimes of escalating severity. Social-service agencies had intervened in their lives at an average age of nine, and their criminal activity began four years later, on average, though some started as early as age seven. Their offenses ranged from curfew violation to rape and murder. A year later, one-third had graduated to adult prisons. Three-fourths were still incarcerated or faced new charges or warrants. Almost all those older than 15 who had been released faced new charges.

7. Punishment works—and the United States has barely tried it.

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Psychologist Sarnoff A. Mednick of the University of Southern California studied the records of thousands of Danish criminals and discovered that punishment is very effective in deterring crime. He compared the criminal histories of thousands of offenders in Copenhagen and Philadelphia who had exactly four or five arrests. Those who received four punishments in a row for their crimes were unlikely to have a fifth arrest. But those who had been punished irregularly after the earlier arrests were more likely to be arrested again.

Mednick studied 28,879 males born in Copenhagen between 1944 and 1947 who lived there through age 26. He found that 6,579 had at least one arrest. The third of arrestees who were not punished went on to commit far more crimes. Mednick found 3,809 offenders were punished after every single arrest, while 2,793 were not. Those who escaped punishment committed three times as many crimes as those consistently punished. Punishment delivered after every offense significantly reduced later offenses. But an offender who was punished for early crimes and received none for later offenses resumed criminal activity at the higher rates.

It made little difference whether the punishment was fines, probation, or incarceration. Consistent delivery of sanctions was more effective than intermittent sanctions, and criminal recidivism recovered when punishment was discontinued. Severity of sanction also made little difference: Longer jail terms, higher fines, and longer probations did not decrease subsequent offenses more than lighter sanctions did.

"Punishment is very effective in suppressing crime, and it does not have to be severe if you get on them early enough," says Mednick. "The way to reduce prison populations is to punish offenders from their first offense with graduated, increasingly severe and certain sanctions. But the records show we do not do that in America." Mednick compared the Danish criminals to those in Marvin Wolfgang's Philadelphia cohort studies. The Philadelphia figures confirmed the effectiveness of punishment, but he also found that only 14 percent of the four- and five-time offenders in the Philadelphia cohorts were punished, compared with 60 percent of those in Denmark.

California tripled its prison population from 1984 to 1994—and significantly reduced its crime rates.

"The big problem with our handling of criminals in America is that they're not punished," he wrote. "People are usually surprised to hear that, because of all our prisons. But the fact is by the time a guy makes his way to jail, that's very often his first punishment. And he usually has committed 15 offenses by then. He might have been arrested 10 times. In Philadelphia, the kids committed huge numbers of offenses, and serious ones, and nothing happened. They just laughed. Our laws provide severe punishments, but . . . they deter not the criminals but the judges. They don't want to throw a kid who's done some little thing in jail, so they just let him go."

8. Prisons work, and they are a relative bargain.

Critics of incarceration claim it has failed because about two-thirds of those released soon land back behind bars. But these studies begin with a batch of released convicts, and each batch contains a high proportion of repeaters who cycle through the revolving doors of justice. Moreover, criminologists have found that these hard-core repeaters get away with a dozen or more serious crimes for every arrest. But two-thirds to three-fourths of criminals sent to prison for the first time never return.

One study that tracked the careers of 6,310 California prisoners released in 1962-63 revealed a shocking picture. These were hard-core criminals: 56 percent had been in prison before, and 44 percent served time for violent crimes, burglary, or robbery. Over the next 26 years, these convicts were arrested 30,464 times, and were probably responsible for more than a quarter-million unsolved crimes. More than half the arrests were nuisance offenses such as parole violations, drunk driving, and disorderly conduct. But the ex-cons were also arrested for about 10,000 serious crimes, including 184 homicides, 2,084 assaults, 126 kidnappings, 144 rapes, 2,756 burglaries, 655 auto thefts, and 1,193 robberies. California could have kept all 5,192 second-termers locked away for an estimated cost of only $2.1 billion—a real bargain in public safety.

Patrick A. Langan, a statistician at the U.S. Department of Justice, calculates that, by doubling the number of criminals in prison from 1973 to 1982, the United States reduced reported crime by 10 to 20 percent. This amounted to 66,000 to 190,000 fewer robberies and 350,000 to 900,000 fewer burglaries in 1982 alone. By tripling the prison population from 1975 to 1989, Langan estimates, we prevented 390,000 murders, rapes, robberies, and aggravated assaults just in 1989.

California tripled its prison population in the decade after 1984—and achieved a significant drop in the rates of reported crime from its peak in 1980-81. Bucking nationwide trends, by 1993

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California had reduced murders by 10.4 percent, rapes by 36 percent, and burglaries by a whopping 43 percent. By the 1990s, that meant nearly 1,000 fewer murders, 16,000 fewer robberies, and a quarter of a million fewer burglaries yearly. The overall serious crime rate fell 14 percent.

The American public is catching on. In 1990, Oregon voters passed, by a margin of three to one, an anti-crime initiative that requires a criminal convicted of a second violent offense to serve his entire sentence with no parole. In November 1993, voters in Washington state passed by a similar margin a "three strikes and you're out" law, which imposes automatic life sentences for three-time felony convicts. Within two years, 14 states altogether and Congress had adopted such laws.

California has been a leader in the "three strikes" movement. The state automatically doubles the sentence for a felon with a prior conviction for a serious or violent felony. A third felony of any sort can trigger a life sentence, with eligibility for parole after 25 years. Philip J. Romero, Governor Pete Wilson's chief economist, estimates that the new law will add an extra 8,300 convicts a year to the state's prison population and will cost $6.5 billion for new prisons in the first five years—but will save society $23 billion net in crime prevented. A Rand study concluded that the new California law, if fully implemented, will cut serious felonies committed by adults between 22 and 34 percent.

In 1994, the American Legislative Exchange Council, the largest bipartisan association of state legislators, published a stunning analysis of prison populations and crime rates in all 50 states. The 10 states that increased their prison populations the most in relation to serious crimes between 1980 and 1992 cut their crime rates by an average of 19 percent. Meanwhile, the 10 states with the smallest increases in incarceration rates saw their crime rates go up by 9 percent on average.

In the 1980s, New Hampshire's legislature executed one of the sharpest policy reversals in the nation. For 20 years, legislators had added little new prison capacity, and the imprisonment rate—the number of prisoners per 1,000 crimes—declined by more than 80 percent, the third sharpest decline of any state. Meanwhile crime had soared by 579 percent, the highest increase in the nation.

All that changed after convicted killer Edward Coolidge, while serving a prison sentence of 25 to 40 years, was released after 18 years with "time off for good behavior." Coolidge had murdered Pamela Mason, a teenaged baby-sitter, and left her abused body in a snow bank. Outraged at his early release, Mason's family started a statewide petition drive for a "truth in sentencing" law to require convicts to serve their minimum sentences in full. Legislators passed the law in 1984 and appropriated $65 million for new prison construction. As a result, New Hampshire increased its incarceration rate between 1980 and 1992 more than any state. In the meantime, crime declined by 34 percent, the steepest drop in the nation.

9. Families are the first line of defense, and we now know how to target and help children raised in our "cradles of crime."

Experts agree that criminal behavior patterns crystallize by the age of eight, and sometimes much sooner. After age eight, youngsters are less likely to respond to correctional treatment as they gravitate toward truancy, street gangs, violent crime, and prison or early death. In Bellingham, Washington, Detective Steve Lance, who directs a police unit that targets serious habitual offenders who are juveniles, echoes: "If we wait until they're eight, it's too late. We've got to get them when they're *two*."

Experts agree that criminal behavior patterns crystallize by age eight, and sometimes much sooner.

Dozens of scientific studies back up the cop's street wisdom. For 60 years, criminologists and psychologists have tracked thousands of youngsters from early childhood into their adult years, identifying the risk factors and early warning signs of delinquency and persistent crime. In recent decades, they have carefully evaluated various early interventions and correctional treatments, comparing treated youngsters to matched groups of untreated ones, winnowing what works and what doesn't. Today we know that the typical "cradles of crime" are households headed by poor unwed mothers who bore their first children as teenagers and live on welfare, usually in public housing with others like them, with few law-abiding, employed male role models among them. Seventy percent of the juvenile offenders in our state reform institutions grew up in a household with only one parent or no parent at all. Children whose mothers are teenagers when they are born have a 10.3 percent chance of landing in jail as juveniles, triple that of children whose mothers bore them between the ages of 20 and 23.

A number of early-childhood intervention programs have been shown to knock many high-risk youngsters off the track to crime, prison, and possible early violent death:

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New York. Syracuse University's Family Development Research Program experimented with a concentrated five-year child-care program for the group at highest risk for child-abuse and neglect complaints: poor, mostly single, pregnant teenagers who had not completed high school. Sixty-five of the women received prenatal health care and two years of weekly home visits by specialists who taught parenting skills, provided counseling in employment and education, and encouraged friends and family to help. Until their children entered public school, they received free day care at the University Children's Center, which aims to develop children's intellectual abilities.

At age 15, the delinquency rate of these kids was 89 percent lower than that of a control group. Moreover, the few who had tangled with the law committed less serious and fewer offenses than their counterparts. The untreated youngsters had cost the criminal-justice system alone—excluding injuries or property losses to victims—$1,985 apiece, compared with $186 per treated child.

Michigan. David Weikart, a University of Michigan doctoral candidate, randomly chose for a two-year enrichment program 58 three- and four-year-old black children from a poor Ypsilanti neighborhood with a terrible school failure rate. The program kids attended daily two-hour classes in small groups with a specialist in the teaching of language through play. Counselors visited their homes weekly to reinforce class activities and to teach the mothers parenting skills.

By the time they turned 27, the preschooled group earned higher grades and were more likely to have graduated, found well-paying jobs, and formed stable families than those in a control group. Even more sensational, the preschooled group averaged half the arrests of the control group, and only a fifth as many had been arrested five or more times. For every $1 spent on early enrichment, taxpayers realized $7.16 in benefits, mostly in savings from crimes prevented.

Seventy percent of juvenile offenders in reform institutions grew up with only one parent or no parents.

Quebec. Richard Trembley, a psychologist from the University of Montreal, tracked 104 of the most disruptive boys from 53 kindergartens. He gave 46 of the boys and their families two years of special training. Parents on average took part in 20 one-hour sessions in how to monitor their children's behavior, praise and punish effectively, and handle family crises. Their boys got 19 sessions in how to make friends, invite others to play, handle anger, respond to rejection and teasing, and follow rules. Five years later, when the boys were 12, the proportion of those who had been involved in gang mischief, a precursor of serious delinquency, was one-tenth that of the untreated youths.

The popular "Head Start" program was also modeled on the Ypsilanti experiment's successes. But, says James Q. Wilson, a political scientist at UCLA, bureaucrats and policymakers "stripped it down to the part that was the most popular, least expensive, and easiest to run, namely, preschool education. Absent from much of Head Start are the high teacher-to-child caseloads, the extensive home visits, and the elaborate parent training—the very things that probably account for much of the success of these programs."

A National Strategy

In outline, a strategy for reducing crime through prevention and punishment would look like this: We should identify the families—mostly households started by unwed teenage mothers—that are likely to be "cradles of crime." For a modest investment, we can sharply reduce the likelihood that their children will engage in persistent criminality by providing educational enrichment, parenting advice, and training in disciplined behavior. In pre-school or first or second grades, we can apply screening techniques at school to find those youngsters with a high risk of troubled futures. At the first contact with police, we should begin keeping permanent records. At the second offense, at the latest, we should bring to bear our best efforts at intensive supervision and family intervention, and impose the first of a series of unequivocal and escalating sanctions. Jailing serious three-time offenders would be a prudent alternative to suffering the millions of crimes habitual criminals perpetrate each year. We should insist that police and prosecutors learn to identify and pursue repeat offenders aggressively. We should hold judges and parole boards accountable for sentencing and incarcerating those felons for whom intervention has come too late, and we should not shrink from investing in the prison space needed to keep recidivists off the streets for good.

It is both humane and smart to turn delinquent youngsters away from a path of crime early, but in cases where all these efforts ultimately fail, in the words of the late sociologist Robert Martinson, "Lock 'em up and weld the door shut!" Our crime rates will plummet.

***Eugene H. Methvin**, a Washington-based contributing editor to* Reader's Digest, *has reported on the American criminal-justice system for more than 40 years.*

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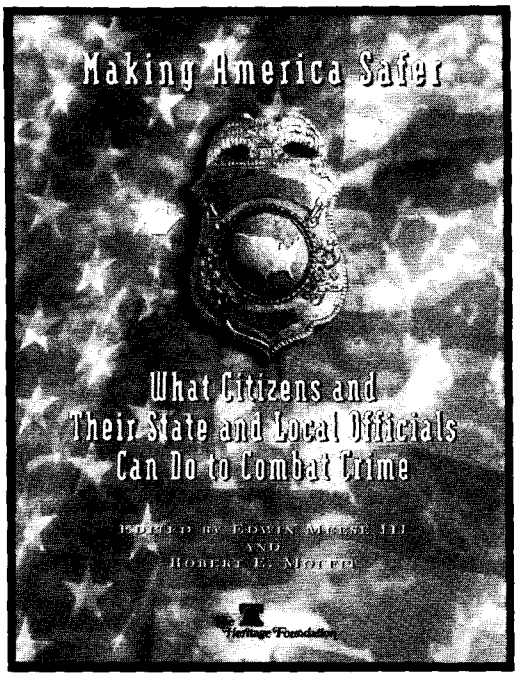

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Pilgrims' Progress

The most important legacy of the Religious Right may ultimately have nothing to do with politics.

By David Aikman

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The scene certainly looked like a triumphant celebration of national power by religious conservatives. Two months before the 1994 elections, a procession of leading Republicans arrived at the ballroom of the Washington Hilton to preen, wink, and troll for votes in front of a conservative, largely evangelical gathering of the Christian Coalition. Phil Gramm, Lamar Alexander, and Trent Lott all delivered stemwinders promising a moral cornucopia for America if their various presidential and congressional campaigns succeeded in 1996. All offered visions of America that were flatteringly attractive to the euphoric crowd at this "Road to Victory" conference.

One might have concluded that the Christian Coalition had finally assumed the confident and unquestioned leadership of all culturally conservative Americans determined to put the country right—both politically and morally. But it is equally plausible that all the hoopla masked something far more ordinary: just another Washington flirtation between presidential wannabes seeking an enthusiastic audience and partisan activists desperate for a new moral and political champion.

A Place at the Table

After the election two months later, some in this audience attributed the stunning success of congressional Republicans to the ascendancy of the Religious Right. The GOP won a majority in the House of Representatives for the first time since 1954, and the hard work and support of Christian Coalition campaigners were probably indispensable. The Coalition mailed out 33 million voter guides and mobilized perhaps 4 million election workers during the campaign, including volunteers from about 60,000 churches, one-sixth of all churches in the nation.

The Religious Right has failed in many of its cherished political and cultural objectives.

In 1996, again with immense support from the Christian Coalition, congressional Republicans managed to hold onto their majority. Ralph Reed, the group's executive director, was enjoying a position of great influence within the GOP. Reed had broadened the Coalition's agenda to include topics as diverse as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the expansion of NATO membership. He had personally helped defuse what might have become a festering public dispute with the B'nai Brith Anti-Defamation League, an influential Jewish institution. He had tried persistently to overcome the suspicion of the African-American community.

Through all this, he insisted that the only objective of the Christian Coalition was to secure for Americans of faith a "place at the table" of American political and cultural decisionmaking. By April 1997, when he announced his departure from the Coalition, he had built its membership from zero to 1.9 million in just eight years and had become perhaps the most articulate and politically astute figure in the entire Religious Right.

By campaigning so actively on behalf of certain Republican candidates, the Christian Coalition, in fact, achieved far more than a "place at the table." For one thing, the 1994 and 1996 cohorts of new House members were far more representative of the nation's religious affiliations than any previous Congress. For example, about a quarter of new members of the House in 1994 were affiliated with evangelical churches, equaling (for the first time in modern political memory) the proportion of evangelicals in the U.S. electorate as a whole. And for the first time in modern political history, a majority of American evangelicals were telling pollsters that they favored the Republican party over the Democrats.

Yet the euphoria of 1994 deserves a second look. Success in House races notwithstanding, no open champion of the Christian Coalition—and hardly any candidates from the Religious Right—has been elected to a governorship or to the U.S. Senate since the Coalition formed in 1989—nor, for that matter, since the birth of the Moral Majority in 1979. More pointedly, the White House prospects of any political candidate closely associated with the Religious Right seem as remote today as they did in 1988, when Pat Robertson failed in his run for the GOP presidential nomination. Americans are still too uncomfortable with the agenda of the Religious Right—at the state or national level—to embrace it outright. Perhaps, they seem to be thinking, it is too narrow, too coercive, and, well, too *religious* for the country.

After 18 years of intense political activity, the Religious Right has failed in many of its cherished political and cultural objectives—from banning abortion to combating the widespread acceptance of homosexuality. This failure may

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be due as much to the movement's political engagement as to the opposition of an establishment elite that rejects its most deeply held values. Though modern religious conservatives have become much more sophisticated in their public relations, they have not yet made their greatest contributions to American civic life. When they do, these contributions are likely to come in the area of culture, not politics.

The Sleeping Giant

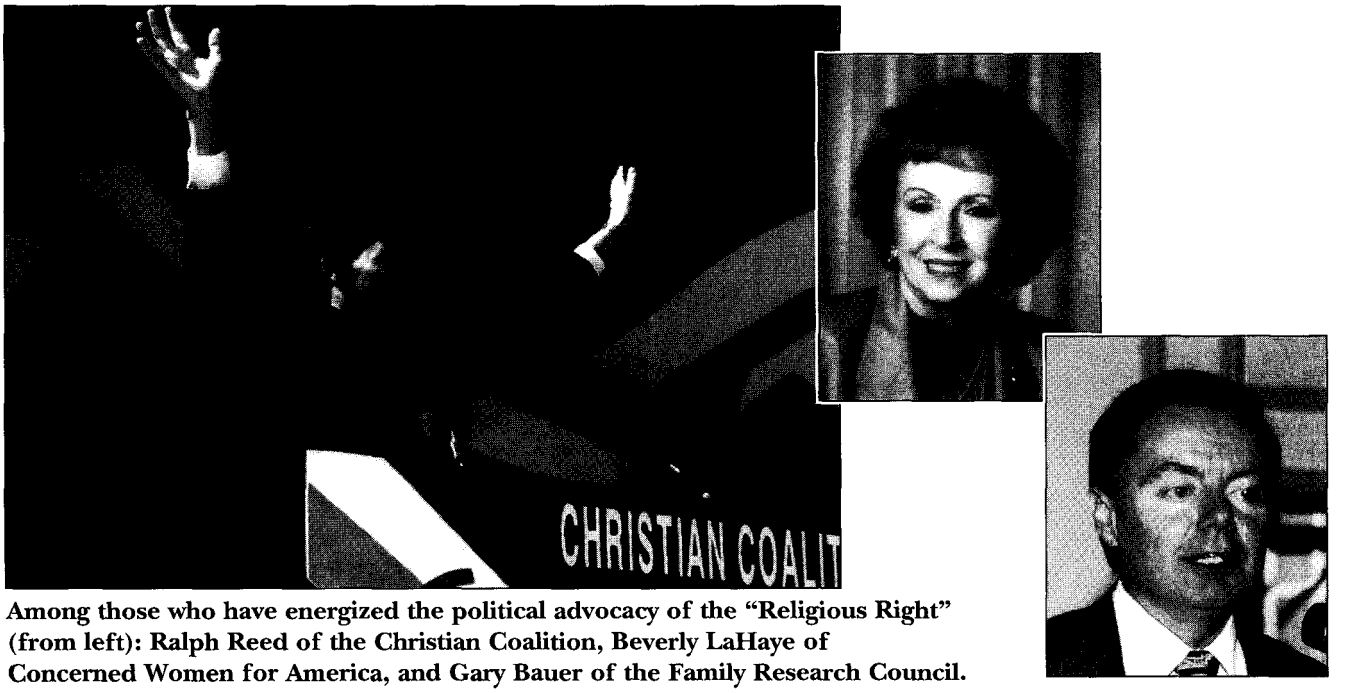
To gauge the prospects of the Religious Right, it is essential to understand its genesis. The term Religious Right, widely used by the early 1980s, was and is clumsy and somewhat pejorative. Yet it's a useful way to describe the large, inchoate movement of often angry Americans who surged to national prominence in the late 1970s, when the Reverend Jerry Falwell and others founded the Moral Majority. The spark was a threat by Jimmy Carter's IRS commissioner in 1978 to strip Christian schools of their tax-exempt status. This skirmish ignited resentments that had been accumulating for at least 10 years.

Many of those resentments are easy to identify. The countercultural movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s had led to massive increases in divorce, out-of-wedlock births, and welfare dependency. Crime rates were rising sharply. And, of course, the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* (1973) pre-empted the abortion laws of the 50 states.

Along with Falwell and the Moral Majority, other groups rose to prominence on this tide of discontent. They included groups such as Focus on the Family, led by James Dobson (syndicated to some 1,600 radio stations nationwide), Gary Bauer's Family Research Council, Concerned Women for America (whose membership of 500,000 is twice as large as the liberal National Organization for Women), the American Center for Law and Justice (a public-interest group of 200 attorneys who litigate to protect religious liberties), and many others. Almost all of them share the theology of Christians who are evangelical; that is, they believe in the inerrancy and authority of the Bible, the necessity of a personal Christian commitment of faith or "born-again" experience, and the obligation to share one's faith with others as widely as possible.

As the cultural conflicts wore on, however, they began to express their evangelical theology in the messy realm of politics. These evangelicals became convinced that national moral regeneration, through the adoption of biblically based moral convictions, was the most effective way to counter the decline of the nation.

Religion, of course, has often motivated political activists throughout American history—from the Puritans, to the Revolution, to the abolitionist and temperance movements, to the struggle for civil rights. Evangelicals or other devout Christians were in the forefront of these movements. But today's Religious Right is different from earlier political and reform movements in a crucial sense: Its activism grew out of a belief that the ardent secularists dominating the intellectual and cultural heights of the American polity were squeezing those with religious conviction out of political debates altogether. In other words, people of faith felt—and still feel—like second-class citizens in the nation they helped establish.



Photos courtesy of the Christian Coalition, the Family Research Council, and Concerned Women of America

Among those who have energized the political advocacy of the "Religious Right" (from left): Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition, Beverly LaHaye of Concerned Women for America, and Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council.

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The Falwell Factor

For many years, the American public associated the movement almost exclusively with Falwell, a Southern Baptist pastor from Lynchburg, Virginia, who had earned a large national radio audience and founded Liberty University, a small college linked to his church.

Falwell was and is sincere in his enthusiasm for preaching the Gospel and trying to lead the unsaved into the Kingdom of Heaven, as evangelical theology directs. But he was perhaps too outspoken about social trends, organizations, and even individuals he deemed harmful to his vision of a healthy America, and too often he criticized them in careless, personal terms. As a result, the intensity of his Christian convictions undermined rather than underscored his criticisms. How much of his agenda, Americans wondered, was animated by political goals, and how much by his evangelical theology?

Numerous other religious figures seemed to share Falwell's penchant for blurring the line between Christian evangelizing and political advocacy to repair the moral fabric of America. As a result, the Religious Right's potential for political success was extremely limited.

For one thing, the very term "Moral Majority" provoked deep resentment. It implied a majoritarian consensus in American national life that was very hard to prove and it suggested that critics of the group's agenda were themselves "immoral." Then some conservative Christian groups tried to evaluate the political positions of members of Congress according to how "Biblical" they were. Although such efforts were theologically interesting, they were also politically absurd. In what sense is a defense budget of $300 billion more "Biblical" than one of, say $250 billion?

Next came the scandals of televangelism. Though they did not involve Falwell himself, the financial or sexual misdeeds of television evangelists Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart convinced many Americans that evangelical leaders were greedy, hypocritical, and mean-spirited. Then prominent supporters of the Moral Majority prompted a major backlash when they asserted that America was a "Christian nation." Though accurate in a descriptive sense—more than three-quarters of Americans call themselves "Christian" in the loosest definition of the term—the phrase was offensive to many secularists, Jews, and other minorities. It sounded like a trumpet call to impose Christianity upon the population through the political process.

By the time religious broadcaster Pat Robertson mounted his presidential run in the 1988 GOP primaries, many—perhaps a majority—of Americans were convinced that a campaign combining Christian evangelism with a political platform for America's moral salvation was not merely inappropriate, but positively dangerous. Robertson's primary campaign suffered its most decisive setback on "Super Tuesday" in March, when he finished third in his home state of Virginia. Although many voters there probably shared Robertson's core evangelical convictions and may have agreed with much of his diagnosis of the state of the nation, they just weren't comfortable with his prescriptions for the country.

Moral indignation had sparked and fueled the Moral Majority's emergence and growth during the early 1980s. It had also galvanized the zealous campaign workers in Robertson's run for the presidency. But moral indignation is a two-edged sword. It may energize supporters for short-term heroic efforts of political activism (as it did on the Left in 1972, when anti-war fervor propelled George McGovern to the Democratic nomination for president) but it is seldom enough to secure long-term political, much less cultural, changes.

Is the Religious Right prepared to move to the center in order to gain wider support for its cultural objectives?

Changing Landscape

To Robertson's credit, he and the Religious Right learned much from the electorate's rejection of him. Evangelical Christian policy prescriptions for what ailed American life could never prevail at any level of government without politically organized support at the grass roots. So in 1989, Robertson changed his entire political strategy by forming the Christian Coalition and handing the reins to Ralph Reed, one of the most gifted political minds in contemporary American politics.

More importantly, the Religious Right started to pursue nonpolitical approaches to items on its agenda, seeking support for particular issues among people who were not politically conservative at all. The groups that broadly constituted the Religious Right created a division of labor, as major organizations like Focus on the Family and the Christian Coalition realized that they could not take up cudgels over every issue that aroused them.

Meanwhile, smaller groups that focused on very specific areas of national life enjoyed considerable success. Legal watchdog groups like the Christian Legal Society, the Rutherford Institute, and the American Center for Law and Justice (another group founded by Robertson, and led

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by the feisty Jay Sekulow) have doggedly protected religious liberties and fought the often mindless bias against religion in public education.

Congress and even the White House have embraced the goals of these activists. The 1984 Equal Access Act, the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and President Clinton's 1996 guidelines on the legitimate expressions of religion in public schools were all the result of meticulous legal work and careful educational campaigns by these organizations and their allies.

Finding Common Ground

Wisely, the Religious Right as a whole appears to have retreated somewhat from assuming there is an unequivocal Christian, or even "religious," position on such complex and controversial topics as NATO expansion, NAFTA, illegal immigration, or any other burning question of the day. Ultimately, though, the movement's constituent groups will have to decide: Is the Religious Right prepared to move towards the American center in order to gain wider support for long-term cultural objectives? Is it willing to sacrifice a partisan preference for GOP candidates in important political races in order to attract a wider audience for its overall moral vision?

Take the issue of abortion, for example. Poll after poll indicates that Americans are distinctly uncomfortable with the procedure, yet unwilling for the most part to ban it altogether. So it would seem more sensible and realistic to chip away at the legality of abortion in areas where there is a strong consensus of public discomfort—such as partial-birth abortions—than to continue to quest after a total ban on the grounds of spiritual principle. Even a ban on partial-birth abortions with some exceptions for the sake of the mother's life or physical health is surely better than no ban at all.

Even more promisingly, American liberals have given surprising support for individual items of the Religious Right's agenda when they are not advanced as part of a grand and threatening campaign. One of the most interesting and successful Christian efforts to reduce the American divorce rate is a program called Marriage Savers that was pioneered by Michael McManus, a Maryland-based newspaper columnist (see article, page 52). Though McManus is an evangelical Christian, he has no connection to the Religious Right. In fact, he has been a rather acidulous and persistent critic of Pat Robertson.

Yet McManus, the author of a popular book entitled *Marriage Savers*, has managed to round up support from such diverse individuals as Joan Brown Campbell, the general secretary of the National Council of Churches; Don Argue, the president of the National Association of Evangelicals; and William Cardinal Keeler, Baltimore's Roman Catholic prelate. Together, they are pushing churches and synagogues in 64 American cities to adopt tough, mandatory marriage-preparation programs and provide marital "mentoring" programs staffed by lay married couples. The effort has reduced divorce rates in Montgomery, Alabama, and Albany, Georgia, by 12 percent in two years, and by a whopping 19 percent over four years in Peoria, Illinois. One Michigan judge was so impressed by the program that he has persuaded all officials performing civil weddings in his jurisdiction to insist that applicants attend marriage-preparation programs beforehand.

Is McManus part of the Religious Right? Absolutely not. Are his objectives in saving American families identical to those of the Religious Right? Totally. The lesson here is that America's "people of faith" (nearly 80 percent of the population) can work together on certain clearly defined social or moral problems even if they differ on everything else, including theology. There is no inherent reason, for example, why evangelical Christians should not work with radical feminist groups who are as opposed to pornography as they are. Nor should it matter that on the issue of abortion, radical feminists are at loggerheads with evangelicals. The collaboration might be beneficial for both sides, as well as for America.

The Religious Center

Without such collaboration, long-term cultural reform is unlikely. Abortion remains legal in every state throughout pregnancy, despite continual protests and lobbying by groups such as the National Right To Life, Concerned Women for America, the Family Research Council, the American Family Association, and others. Pornography has been banned from public display in stores used by the general public—one success of Religious Right activism—but continues to flourish on the Internet. But in regard to the gay lifestyle, another hot button for conservatives, and something with which the general public is obviously uncomfortable, the Religious Right has failed so far to frame the argument in a way that seems neither intolerant nor bigoted.

The Religious Right alienated Americans with a vindictive tone of speech and action that seemed to outweigh the social worthiness of its causes.

To be sure, religious, and particularly Christ-

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ian, conservatives seeking a national mandate for moral leadership have always faced bitter antagonism from America's cultural gatekeepers on the Left. Christian conservatives also encounter a persistent suspicion that they want to use the political process to impose puritanical standards of personal behavior upon their fellow citizens. As much sympathy as they may have for specific parts of the Religious Right's agenda, Americans as a whole remain uncomfortable with the notion of the Religious Right's achieving political power *en bloc*.

The Religious Right now faces a turning point in its development. It has accomplished a great deal in the political arena despite its setbacks at the higher levels of political power. A broad swath of the American public supports significant parts of its agenda: preserving religious freedom, securing educational choice and improvement, saving the American family, restricting (if not banning) abortion, and limiting pornography. Perhaps its greatest conceptual challenge now is to persuade both its supporters and the American people that its ultimate goal is not the Christianization of America.

As individuals, of course, evangelical Christians have a constitutional right and a moral duty to proclaim their faith whenever they have opportunity to do so. But these proclamations should never intermingle with the political process. Whenever the public perceives such an association, it objects vigorously—and rightly so. One way in which the Religious Right could reassure Americans as a whole that the vast majority of its supporters are not would-be Ayatollahs is to explain tirelessly that evangelicals may share exactly the same theology and still differ with each other sharply on important political questions. Most Americans harbor fervent antipathy toward any notion of an established state religion.

Americans are arguably the most fair-minded citizens of any country in the world. They have an intuitive sense of what seems fair at the social and political level. They get carried away by fashions and trends from time to time, but sooner or later they come back to their senses. The Religious Right alienated many Americans in its early years by a tone of speech and action whose vindictiveness seemed to outweigh the social worthiness of the causes it adopted. Reed and others have repaired some of the damage, but more repair work is needed.

Perhaps one way to start would be for culturally conservative religious groups, whether Christian, Jewish, or Islamic, to cease thinking of themselves as "right" in the political sense. What the Religious Right really ought to be, even if it dare not call itself this, is the "Religious Center"—a genuine "moral majority" of Americans who agree strongly on "pro-family" issues, but agree to differ on a whole lot else. Christian Coalition supporters may indeed campaign for specific GOP candidates, but they should realize that their partisanship in the political arena may undercut their other efforts in the social and cultural ones.

The new Religious Center ought to capitalize on the widespread grass roots unhappiness with America's cultural and moral condition. Massive and careful polling by the University of Virginia's Post-Modernity Project in 1996 showed that Americans are deeply pessimistic, not so much about the specific policies of the White House or the Congress, as about the nation's overall *political culture*. Fifty-five percent of Americans believe our nation is in strong-to-moderate decline, and about two-thirds believe there is a clear decline in standards in family, education, ethics, and popular entertainment. Americans may have a short-term confidence in their economic future, but they remain unhappy over many of the hidden diseases infecting their culture.

The movement's greatest challenge is to persuade the public that its ultimate goal is not the Christianization of America.

The new Religious Center faces a stiff challenge: Identify this sickness in terms that are not religiously exclusive, and suggest remedies that are effective without seeming intolerant. A major spiritual re-awakening among evangelical and mainstream American Christians is undoubtedly vital to this effort. So, too, are broad-based programs on family issues that appeal to mainstream groups. Nor is there anything wrong with vigorous political activism and campaigning for candidates of either political party who seem friendly to the pro-family programs of this new Religious Center. In fact, the Christian Coalition has campaigned occasionally on behalf of culturally conservative Democrats, part of Reed's own vision of "casting a wider net."

Political advocacy for national social change is a healthy tradition of the American polity. So are movements of evangelism and spiritual renewal, both within Christendom and in other segments of the American faith community. But the two traditions should be kept zealously—I dare say religiously—apart.

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Modern Tomes

George H. Nash On 20 Years of Great Conservative Thought

A number of years ago, the writers Malcolm Cowley and Bernard Smith invited a group of American intellectuals to identify the nonfiction books of recent decades that had most impressed them and had to some extent influenced their thinking. The result was an intriguing volume entitled *Books That Changed Our Minds.* In it, 11 contributors analyzed such classics as *The Education of Henry Adams* and Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West.*

The Cowley–Smith anthology came to mind recently when the editors of *Policy Review* asked me to compile a list of the most important and influential works advancing conservative ideas in the past 20 years. At first the task seemed simple, as obvious candidates sprang quickly to consciousness. Then it became more daunting, as the sheer scope of conservative literature since 1977 came into view. How to extract from this vast and specialized cornucopia a mere 10 or 15 titles? Moreover, many conservative books of the last two decades have been intellectually important and richly deserving of recognition but not, alas, as influential as they ought to be. Many other conservative writings in this period have been primarily of intramural significance—applauded inside the movement but unfortunately little noticed outside it.

How, then, should we navigate the rapids? It is here that the Cowley–Smith volume of years ago suggests a decisive criterion: Which writings of a conservative character in the past 20 years can be said to have *changed minds*? Which have discernably altered America's public conversation and (in some cases) its public policy?

What follows, then, is neither an exhaustive canon of recent conservative "great books" nor a mechanical compendium of bestsellers. It is, rather, a chronological list of 12 books, two articles, and two speeches that, at least as much as many others, have given the intellectual climate of our time a conservative cast.

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"A World Split Apart"
Commencement address, Harvard University
(June 8, 1978)
Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

Exiled from the Soviet Union in 1974, the acclaimed author and dissident came to the West a hero of the resistance to communist tyranny. The message he brought with him, however, was profoundly discomfiting to liberal and "pragmatic" Americans in the post-Vietnam era of *détente*. In an astonishing commencement address at Harvard, Solzhenitsyn decried the moral cowardice, flaccidity, materialistic self-indulgence, and misuses of freedom in the West and accused its ruling elites of a loss of "civic courage" in the face of communist evil.

How had this predicament come to pass? For Solzhenitsyn, it was nothing less than a civilizational catastrophe literally centuries in the making. At Harvard—the academic capital of secular, liberal modernity—he unabashedly traced the West's "present debility" to a defective worldview "born in the Renaissance" and unleashed politically by the Enlightenment: "the calamity of an autonomous, irreligious humanistic consciousness." Liberating "imperfect man" from "the moral heritage of Christian centuries," and proclaiming man's autonomy "from any higher force above him," "rationalistic humanism" had eventually produced, in the 20th century, a world scarred by materialistic decadence, "moral poverty," and spiritual deprivation. "Humanism that has lost its Christian heritage," he added, could not prevail against materialistic communism.

In his searing indictment of atheistic humanism, and in his call for fundamental spiritual renewal transcending the "ossified formulas of the Enlightenment," Solzhenitsyn expressed with remarkable force themes espoused by American conservatives from Whittaker Chambers to the Religious Right of today.

The Way the World Works (1978)
Jude Wanniski

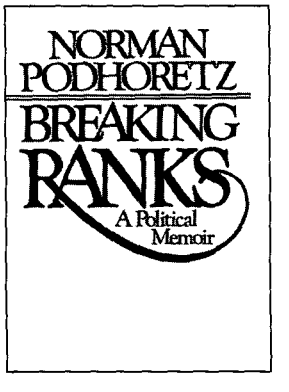
Hailed by Irving Kristol as the "best economic primer since Adam Smith," this book introduced the world to the intellectual counterrevolution of the 1970s known as supply-side economics. Together with Arthur Laffer, Jack Kemp, Robert Bartley, and others, Wanniski articulated a growing assault on a vulnerable Keynesian orthodoxy and—in the process—converted much of the GOP to a new orthodoxy of its own, centered on economic growth and cuts in tax rates. Two decades later, tax cuts remain at the core of conservative Republicanism.

Breaking Ranks (1979)
Norman Podhoretz

If much of modern conservatism is a revolt against the 1930s and the New Deal, much of contemporary neoconservatism is a revolt against the 1960s. No one has explored the interior history of this decade more trenchantly than Norman Podhoretz in *Breaking Ranks*. The editor of *Commentary* from 1960 to 1995, Podhoretz believes that "clarity is courage," and in this memoir he tells the story of his journey from liberalism to radicalism to neoconservatism with a clarity that brought him contumely from former allies. By publicly defecting from the Left and critiquing it so effectively, Podhoretz undermined two widespread assumptions in left-of-center circles: the belief that history, in the long run, always favors "progressive" causes, and the belief that only liberalism and radicalism are respectable points of view. By destroying the automatic equation of liberalism with intelligence and of "progressivism" with progress, Podhoretz and his fellow neoconservatives made it impossible for the Left to condescend any longer to the Right. The terrain of public debate in America was transformed.

"Dictatorships and Double Standards"
Commentary (November 1979)
Jeane Kirkpatrick

When this seminal essay appeared, American foreign policy was floundering. Pro-American but authoritarian regimes in Nicaragua and Iran had just given way to anti-American and even more authoritarian ones—and all with the befuddled collaboration of the U.S. government. Fettered by an idealistic concern for human rights, the administration of Jimmy Carter seemed increasingly unable to differentiate friend from foe.



At this critical juncture in the Cold War, Kirkpatrick, a Georgetown professor and a registered Democrat, propounded two arguments that conservatives eagerly seized upon. Traditional, authoritarian autocracies, she asserted, are less repressive, less disruptive of the lives of the people, and less systemically evil than revolutionary regimes of the Left with their utopian and totalitarian ideologies. And traditional, authoritarian regimes are more "susceptible of liberalization" and eventual democratization than leftist ones led by Marxist revolutionaries.

Kirkpatrick's article led to her becoming the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations in the

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Reagan administration. (Ronald Reagan himself read and admired this essay.) Just as important, it provided American policymakers a powerful conceptual framework for making necessary distinctions between greater and lesser evils in their prosecution of the Cold War. This article helped to relieve what was threatening to become a paralyzing tension between realism and idealism in American foreign policy.

Free To Choose (1980)
Milton and Rose Friedman

In early 1980, as the nation's economy groaned under the burden of soaring inflation and unemployment, Nobel laureate Milton Friedman—America's most famous free-market economist—hosted a 10-part series on public television entitled *Free To Choose.* In the spring, he and his wife published a companion volume by the same name; it became the best-selling nonfiction book of the entire year. In it they explained with unrivaled lucidity their classical liberal philosophy of freedom and applied it to a host of policy issues.

At the end of *Free To Choose,* the authors ventured to declare that Americans were "waking up." "We are recognizing the dangers of an overgoverned society, coming to understand . . . that reliance on the freedom of people to control their own lives in accordance with their own values is the surest way to achieve the full potential of a great society." A few months later, Ronald Reagan was elected president. In *Free To Choose,* the Friedmans helped to catalyze the intellectual ferment that produced the "Reagan Revolution."

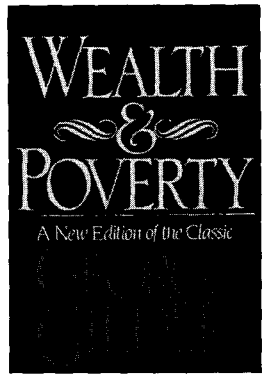
Wealth and Poverty (1981)
George Gilder

If Jude Wanniski was the most ardent propagandist for supply-side economics, writer George Gilder has been called its theologian. Appearing at the dawn of the Reagan era, *Wealth and Poverty* audaciously propelled the case for capitalism upward, out of the mundane sphere of taxation and public policy and onto the higher plane of morality and metaphysics. Where even some defenders of the free market had heretofore been willing to give but two cheers for capitalism, Gilder unashamedly gave three. His book was an ode to entrepreneurship as marvelously creative, basically altruistic, and veritably moral. "A successful economy depends on the proliferation of the rich," he asserted. Successful entrepreneurs were "the heroes of economic life."

Scorning the gloom-and-doom ideologies of the stagnant 1970s, he proclaimed: "Our greatest and only resource is the miracle of human creativity in a relation of openness to the divine." Here was a book worthy of Reagan's buoyant vision of America. By fearlessly extolling the moral promise of entrepreneurial capitalism, and by mounting a lively assault on the modern welfare state, Gilder not only authored an unusual and refreshing apologia for freedom and creativity. He also strengthened growing populistic sentiment on the Right against managerial elitists who presume to guide entire economies.

The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism (1982)
Michael Novak

By the early 1980s, it was increasingly plain that socialism in practice had failed and that capitalism had proven far more beneficial to the human race. And yet, despite its undeniable triumphs, wrote Michael Novak, not one theologian—Christian or Jewish—had ever evaluated the "theological significance" of this extraordinarily successful form of political economy.



In *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism,* Novak—a Roman Catholic social theorist and historian—elucidated the spiritual and moral foundations of "democratic capitalism" as an interlocking unity embracing a market economy, a democratic polity, and a moral-cultural matrix animated by "ideals of liberty and justice for all." By examining democratic capitalism at the level of ideals and values, and by declaring its superiority to socialism at this level, Novak contributed powerfully to the intellectual rehabilitation of this system of social organization, particularly among Christian thinkers. His book became an antidote to that strange but fashionable brew of Christianity and Marxism in the 1970s and 1980s known as "liberation theology."

Reflections of a Neoconservative (1983)
Irving Kristol

In his introduction to this collection of essays, the longtime editor of the *Public Interest* observed that neoconservatism "aims to infuse American bourgeois orthodoxy with a new self-conscious intellectual vigor while dispelling the feverish mélange of gnostic humors that, for more than a century now, has suffused our political beliefs and has tended to convert them into political religions." In the past 20 years, no conservative or neoconservative has done more to carry out this mission. Much of Irving Kristol's work has occurred quietly, in his encouragement of the scholarship and institution-building that have powered the conservative cause. But much of his contribution has taken the form of incisive

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and influential essays published in the *Wall Street Journal* and various magazines. *Reflections* is an excellent collection of these pieces, mostly written in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This anthology should be supplemented by Kristol's *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea* (1995).

Address to the Natl. Assoc. of Evangelicals (March 8, 1983)
Ronald Reagan

This was the unforgettable speech in which the president of the United States forthrightly labeled the Soviet Union an "evil empire." "The real crisis we face today is a spiritual one," Reagan went on; "at root, it is a test of moral will and faith." In prose that proved to be prophetic, he added: "I believe that communism is another sad, bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages even now are being written."

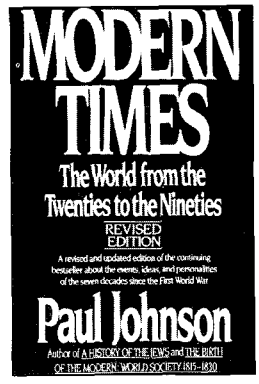
For American conservatives and for friends of freedom everywhere, Reagan's address was a bracing affirmation of truth, an ideological shot heard round the world. It is not too much to suggest that the conservative president's unapologetic verbal offensive against communism—of which this speech was a classic expression—was one of the catalytic agents that set the Soviet Union on the path to extinction.

Modern Times (1983, rev. 1991)
Paul Johnson

No conservative's bookshelf should be without this provocative reinterpretation of 20th-century history emphasizing the staggering evil wrought by "the rise of moral relativism, the decline of moral responsibility, the repudiation of Judeo-Christian values," intellectual hubris, and the unconstrained, ideologically driven State. To those who believed that "an enlarged state could increase the sum total of human happiness," the British ex-socialist Johnson taught otherwise. In the 20th century, he said, the State "had proved itself an insatiable spender, an unrivaled waster," and "the greatest killer of all time." For conservatives of every persuasion—libertarian, traditionalist, anticommunist, neoconservative, and Religious Right—Johnson's volume provided an invaluable history lesson and counterweight to the deadly progressivist utopianism of our times.

The Naked Public Square (1984)
Richard John Neuhaus

In the decade or so before this book appeared, a startling political awakening of Protestant evangelicals and other religious conservatives occurred, to the consternation of many liberal Americans. Were not the Moral Majority and its allies, they thought, threats to democracy and tolerance? Although often sharply critical of the religious New Right, Richard John Neuhaus—himself a Christian cleric—was even more disturbed by a regnant ideology of militant secularism that was driving religion and religiously derived values from the nation's public life. If our "public square" remains thus denuded, he warned, democracy itself would be at risk. For the "naked public square" would not stay empty; the vacuum would be filled by false gods and tyrants much more intolerant (and intolerable) than traditional religion. A "public ethic" necessary for the survival of American democracy, Neuhaus contended, "cannot be reestablished unless it is informed by religiously grounded values." The "religious base of the democratic experiment" must be rearticulated.


MODERN TIMES
The World from the Twenties to the Nineties
REVISED EDITION
A revised and updated edition of the continuing bestseller about the events, ideas, and personalities of the seven decades since the First World War
Paul Johnson
Author of A HISTORY OF THE JEWS and THE BIRTH OF THE MODERN: WORLD SOCIETY 1815–1830

The Naked Public Square remains a *locus classicus* for the argument that people of faith have a right and obligation to participate in public affairs—not only for their own sakes but for the health of our common polity. This book endures as a formidable obstacle to secularist triumphalism.

Losing Ground (1984)
Charles Murray

It was not enough for conservatives in the 1980s to preach the virtues of democratic capitalism and supply-side economics. They needed a credible empirical critique of the liberal politics of compassion. In 1984, Charles Murray delivered it. Deploying an array of statistical indices of social well-being, Murray documented an astounding pattern: From 1950 to the mid-1960s, the condition of America's poor (including blacks) gradually improved, only to deteriorate—often severely—after 1965. Indeed, the "number of people living in poverty," Murray reported, "stopped declining just as the public-assistance program budgets and the rate of increase in those budgets were highest."

Whence this staggering and unexpected reversal of the trendlines? Why did so many of America's poor become worse off in the 1970s than they had been in the early 1960s? Murray's answer was equally stunning: The War on Poverty—the crown jewel of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society—wrought devastating havoc on the poor. The War on Poverty—compassionate liberalism in action—"changed the rules of their world," encouraged behavior that was "destructive in the long term," and subsidized its own "irretrievable mistakes." "We tried to remove the barriers to es-

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cape from poverty," said Murray, "and inadvertently built a trap."

Murray's book was immediately and sometimes harshly criticized from the Left. But as a sophisticated social scientist who had done his homework, he could not be ignored. *Losing Ground* still stands as one of the most powerful indictments of liberal social policy ever written by a scholar on the Right.

"Dan Quayle Was Right"
Atlantic Monthly (April 1993)
Barbara Dafoe Whitehead

By the 1990s, alarming patterns of social deviancy and regression had begun to appear far beyond the poor and underclass. The structure of the family itself seemed to be disintegrating, and politicians were taking note. In a 1992 speech, Vice President Dan Quayle called for a renewed "public commitment" to "our Judeo-Christian values," including marriage, and added:

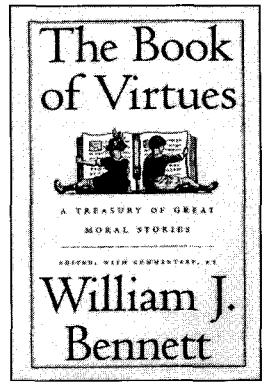
"It doesn't help matters when prime time TV has Murphy Brown—a character who supposedly epitomizes today's intelligent, highly paid, professional woman—mocking the importance of fathers, by bearing a child alone, and calling it just another 'lifestyle choice.'"

For his pains Quayle was scathingly berated, and the cause of "family values" was mocked. The actress who played Murphy Brown received an honorary degree at an Ivy League university. How surprising, then, that less than a year later an *Atlantic Monthly* article suggested boldly that Quayle was right. Barbara Dafoe Whitehead—not known as a conservative—assembled a panoply of data demonstrating what to conservatives seemed obvious: The widespread dissolution of intact, two-parent families had been harmful for millions of children. Once more the liberationist ethos of the 1960s stood indicted by its undeniable consequences. The "vast natural experiment in family life" in the past 25 years, said Whitehead, had yielded "the first generation in the nation's history to do worse psychologically, socially, and economically than its parents."

Whitehead's article—appearing, as it did, in a liberal magazine—undoubtedly did much to legitimate conservative perspectives on a central issue in the "culture wars." "Family values" now became everyone's concern. Of course, many on the Left seemed to prefer to talk about children and their "villages" (rather than parents) as the key elements in the social equation. Whitehead, however, stressed the importance of families, a more conservative formulation. Like many other articles by conservatively oriented analysts in the 1990s, her essay exemplified the growing validation by social-science research of traditional moral teachings: what Rudyard Kipling called "the gods of the copybook headings."

The Book of Virtues (1993)
William Bennett

If the social agenda of religious conservatives could be summed up in a phrase, it might be (to borrow from Gertrude Himmelfarb) "the re-moralization of society." But in the face of profound social disorientation, vulgar relativism and hedonism, and a "naked"—even hostile—"public square," how does one do this? In 1993, William Bennett resorted to an unconventional stratagem: He compiled a massive anthology of moral tales and poetry designed to teach children such virtues as self-discipline, responsibility, courage, perseverance, and honesty. By drawing primarily upon the classic wisdom of Western civilization, by writing openly of the need for "moral literacy," and by unflinchingly labeling his collection a book of *virtues*, Bennett set himself against the postmodernist and decadent sensibilities so prevalent in elite and popular culture. His anthology became a bestseller.



Bennett's venture is a useful reminder that conservative concerns encompass more than economics, political theory, and public policy. The preservation of a humane and civil society requires the constant replenishment of the moral and spiritual sources of our conduct. In this respect, conservatism is a private as well as a public philosophy.

The Vision of the Anointed (1995)
Thomas Sowell

In the past two decades, the conservative social scientist Thomas Sowell has produced a barrage of important books on race and ethnicity, political philosophy, and other subjects. Of these, the most wide-ranging, yet laserlike in its intensity, is *The Vision of the Anointed: Self-Congratulation as a Basis of Public Policy.* In this withering polemic, Sowell lays bare the underlying assumptions and baneful consequences of "the prevailing vision of our time," a vision "dangerously close to sealing itself off from any discordant feedback from reality." It is the predominant vision of the American intelligentsia and its followers: a "self-anointed elite" that sees itself as morally and intellectually superior to the rest of us. Sowell deftly contrasts this elite's worldview—liberalism—with the "tragic vision" of conservatives. The "anointed," for example, quite literally con-

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sider reality to be "socially constructed" and therefore capable of being "deconstructed" and reconstructed at will. For them the world is "a very tidy place," where "human nature is readily changeable" and social problems can be "solved."

But Sowell does not stop here. Invoking a wealth of social-science data and other documentation, he concludes that in area after area of American life, the liberal vision of the anointed has brought about "social degeneration" and immense devastation since the 1960s. Ours has been an era, he says, of "self-inflicted wounds" inflicted by "supposedly 'thinking people' " who fancied themselves "wiser and nobler than the common herd." "Seldom," he finds, "have so few cost so much to so many." For a concise, morally impassioned, and relentless arraignment of contemporary liberalism in theory and practice, look no further than this book.

Not Without Honor: The History of American Anticommunism (1996)
Richard Gid Powers

When Richard Powers began work on this book, he tells us, he believed that "anticommunism displayed America at its worst." Instead, "I came to see in anticommunism America at its best." From a liberal academic in the 1990s, these are unexpected words, and *Not Without Honor* is an unexpected book: a comprehensive, scholarly history of American anticommunism in which the contribution of many conservatives—including William F. Buckley Jr. and Ronald Reagan—receives respectful, even sympathetic, treatment.

Powers, to be sure, is severely critical of some manifestations of the anticommunist impulse. To the irritation of some on the Right, he differentiates sharply between those he deems "responsible anticommunists" (including Buckley, Norman Podhoretz, and the anticommunist Left) and those he disapprovingly labels "countersubversives": above all, Senator Joseph McCarthy and his fellow conspiracy-hunters. In his desire to rescue anticommunism from McCarthyism, Powers does not, perhaps, take full measure of what James Burnham called "the web of subversion" that existed in America in the early years of the Cold War. Still, in a climate of academic opinion long dominated by anti-anticommunist biases, *Not Without Honor* presents American resistance to communism as an essentially honorable and even noble cause. For conservatives—and for a balanced historical memory—this is a long step forward.

Taken all together, these works remind us of how far conservatism has traveled since William F. Buckley Jr., in *Up From Liberalism*, mourned "the failure of the conservative demonstration." Since then, and with increasing power and frequency, conservatives have made their "demonstration" in the demanding arena of public debate. Of course, there is always more to do as the challenges multiply and as our age (in Whittaker Chambers's words) "finds its own language for an eternal meaning."

***George H. Nash** is the author of* The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945, *reissued last year in an updated edition by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute. A historian and lecturer, he is also the author of a multivolume biography of Herbert Hoover.*

Do you have your own selections? Write to us, c/o Policy Review, *214 Massachusetts Ave. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, or e-mail us at polrev@heritage.org. We will publish the best responses.*

And Let's Not Forget . . .

There are important books and there are influential books. And then there are indispensable books, like George H. Nash's *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945* (first published in 1976 by Basic Books).

Do you want to know the 40 or so scholars and writers who constituted the intellectual core of American conservatism in the post-World War II period? How their ideas of limited government, free enterprise, moral order, and anticommunism were first rejected, then accepted, and finally came to dominate American politics? How *National Review* senior editor Frank Meyer fashioned "fusionism"—his synthesis of the traditionalist and libertarian branches of conservatism? Or even what Russell Kirk initially intended to call his monumental work, *The Conservative Mind*?

All this and much more is to be found in Nash's masterful book, which is part history, part biography, and always fair in its assessment of the impact of the diverse philosophers and popularizers of American conservatism. In an epilogue to the 1996 edition (published by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute), biographer-historian Nash describes the conservative forces emerging over the last 20 years, or what he calls "the age of Reagan." Nash deftly sketches the emergence of the neoconservatives and the rise of the New Right, which evolved into the Religious Right. He recounts the remarkable multiplication of conservative journals, advocacy groups, and think tanks in Washington and across the country. He describes the growing conservative commitment to restoring civil society from the bottom up. His brilliant but necessarily brief overview of the current state of conservatism inspires this reaction: Get busy, Brother Nash. Conservatives need volume two of *The Conservative Intellectual Movement* in America.

—Lee Edwards

Lee Edwards, a conservative historian and biographer, is a senior fellow at The Heritage Foundation.

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The New Social Architects

Forget Big Government: Bold entrepreneurs are taking on our toughest social ills—and winning.

By April Lassiter

Illustration by Phil Foster

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Millard Fuller

Habitat for Humanity

Here's a charity that scorns the concept of the handout in no uncertain terms. In fact, about the only thing they hand you at Habitat for Humanity is a hammer and a carpenter's belt. If you want a home for your family, they reason, you should help build it.

Championed by former president Jimmy Carter, Habitat for Humanity has helped provide shelter for more than 250,000 low-income people, constructing about 40,000 homes. Its goal is to help the needy achieve and maintain permanent economic independence. Investing their own "sweat equity," families assisted by Habitat help to build their own homes and assume ownership. Thanks to corporate support and an army of volunteers, Habitat homes in the United States are built for an average cost of $35,000.

The organization is the brainchild of Millard Fuller, a self-made millionaire who poured all of his money into founding the group in 1976. Based in Americus, Georgia, Habitat is now a global organization with nearly 1,500 active affiliates and building projects in more than 40 nations.

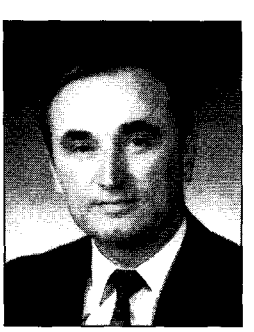
Habitat has recently accepted AmeriCorps staffing and funding from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. Fuller will accept government funds provided they come without conditions that might interfere with Habitat's Christian witness.

Marvin Olasky

World magazine

As a Marxist atheist undergraduate at Yale, Marvin Olasky once conducted an art project in which he let a black cat out of a bag onto the floor. This was a metaphor, he explained, for how the Black Panthers were freeing themselves from the racial oppression of American society

Today, Olasky says, he's a lot smarter about both religion and economics. A convert to evangelical Christianity, he has risen to national prominence through the promotion of "effective compassion"—material and spiritual help that upholds the dignity of the needy. His studies of 19th-century charities that lifted people out of poverty have propelled him to the forefront of the debate on welfare reform. After joining the University of Texas as a professor of journalism, Olasky and his wife started several "mustard-seed" groups, such as a crisis-pregnancy center in Austin. There, Olasky learned that "the great hope for our society lies with the millions of ordinary people who in quiet ways do heroic things every day."



William Bratton

Olasky is the editor of *World*, the lively evangelical newsweekly magazine based in Asheville, N.C., with a circulation of 75,000. No author has been more widely read over the past few years as a source of wisdom on private alternatives to the welfare state. Among his 11 books, *The Tragedy of American Compassion* (1992) and *Renewing American Compassion* (1996) have been particularly influential. Effective charity, Olasky argues, must be personal, challenging, and spiritual. In his inaugural address as Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich urged all Americans to read Olasky's work.

Habitat for Humanity's Millard Fuller.

William Bratton

New York City Police Department

"We will fight for every house in the city, we will fight for every block. And we will win." So pledged William Bratton at his swearing in as the police commissioner of New York City in 1994. And he kept his word. By the end of 1996, recorded incidents of seven major felonies had fallen by 33 percent and homicide by 50 percent.

Bratton's approach was based on the "broken windows" theory—that smaller infractions lead to larger scale crime and civil disorder. From his days as chief of the Transit Authority Police Department, Bratton knew that one out of every seven people arrested for fare evasion were wanted on a warrant, and that one in 14 was arrested for packing illegal guns. Bratton's first step was to train his men in aggressive "order maintenance" to address the smallest of missteps, in an effort to alert citizens and would-be criminals that behavior degrading the quality of life in the city would not be tolerated.

Second, Bratton deflated a bloated police bureaucracy by devolving authority to precinct commanders and holding them accountable for crime reduction. He scrapped the department's previous strategy of rapid response to crimes after they happen, and built a partnership between the police and the community to identify problems and focus on prevention.

Bratton also introduced a new computerized tracking system for crime statistics. At biweekly meetings with precinct commanders, he posted the latest statistics and analyzed them to determine how best to deploy police resources.

William Bratton retired in 1996 to head First Security Services Corporation, which consults on crime reduction strategies for police departments around the country.

All photos courtesy of subjects

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Conna Craig with her mom.

Robert Woodson

National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise

"I never left the civil-rights movement, they left me," says Bob Woodson, the president of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise (NCNE). The youngest of eight kids, Woodson grew up in inner-city Philadelphia. After earning his master's in social work at the University of Pennsylvania, he set off to organize and lead demonstrations as a program director for the National Urban League.

But Woodson became disenchanted with poverty programs that treated poor people with contempt while benefiting the "Poverty Pentagon"—social workers, politicians, contractors, unions, and real estate developers "who know how to make a buck off government money." So he started NCNE in 1981 to assist self-help groups in low-income neighborhoods: Former alcoholics, like Bob Cote, who help drug abusers and alcoholics turn their lives around, and public housing tenants, like Kimi Gray, who manage housing projects better than government bureaucrats. Woodson's annual awards ceremony for "Achievement Against the Odds" honors local heroes he compares to Joseph in the Book of Genesis—undesirables who are scorned by government and the media but who have a special faith and wisdom to address the ills of their communities.

Robert Woodson

Always looking for ways to draw on the real-life experiences of lay people, Woodson in early 1997 worked with members of rival gangs to negotiate a peace in their D.C. neighborhood. The young men are now working together to ensure the safety of their communities.

Conna Craig

Institute for Children

As president of the Institute for Children, Conna Craig argues that all the government funding and state-run programs in the world can never equal a mom and dad. As a former foster child who was eventually adopted and who watched hundreds of other kids pass through her home, Craig learned this lesson first hand.

After conducting exhaustive research for her undergraduate thesis at Harvard, she discovered that 50,000 foster children were languishing in state care even though they were legally free to be adopted. She subsequently founded the Institute, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to reform America's foster care and adoption system.

The Institute fingers two main culprits for creating this tragedy of lost childhoods: an incentive system that gives bureaucrats more money when they keep more children in foster care, and a mindset that some children are too hard to place, despite waiting lists of families ready to adopt even the most emotionally troubled and physically handicapped children.

Advising governors and members of Congress, Craig brings a market-oriented perspective to child-welfare policy. When Massachusetts embraced Craig's recommendations, the number of foster children adopted in the state rose from 599 in 1992 to 1,124 in 1996. Adoptions out of foster care have risen by 40 percent in Kansas since the state privatized the system. Earlier this year, South Carolina adopted Craig's suggestions. Craig has even delivered her message of reform to the White House, which recently called for doubling the adoptions out of foster care.

Rafe Esquith

Hobart Elementary School

In Room 52 at Hobart Elementary in inner-city Los Angeles, school is almost always in session. But these mostly poor kids from tough neighborhoods aren't here because they are struggling to keep up. These fifth-graders are here because teacher Rafe Esquith gives them a vision of excellence and achievement—a vision that most of them are claiming as their own.

"America is supposed to be a land of equal opportunity, but it's not," Esquith says. "Just call me the Education Equalizer." That's hardly hyperbole. His class places in the 98th percentile in mathematics and the 92nd percentile in English. And although the majority of his students speak English as a second language, by the end of the sixth grade they will have mastered a year of algebra and classical literature. His "Hobart Shakespeareans" have performed with Britain's Royal Shakespeare Company and opened the World Shakespeare Congress last year with "Measure for Measure."

Esquith's secret: hard work and high expectations.

It's not unusual for students to spend 10 hours a day in his classroom—reciting Shakespeare on cue, studying Mozart concertos, and tackling complicated math equations. Esquith follows his students even after they graduate from junior high. He offers his former students Saturday tutoring sessions and extra preparation for the SATs.

Too demanding? Just ask the kids who jockey for position in his classroom and sign up to see him after class. No wonder Walt Disney named him Outstanding Teacher of the Year in 1992.

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Michael McManus
Marriage Savers

Journalist Michael McManus says churches are both the problem and solution to America's divorce problem. Frustrated with churches that act as "wedding factories with a rented chapel, hired pastor and organist," he and his wife travel the country encouraging clergy to adopt a Community Marriage Policy, under which they pledge not to marry couples who have not prepared themselves for the rigors of married life.

In his book *Marriage Savers*, McManus advocates several steps to lasting marriages: premarital counseling, issue checklists to help couples get to know each other, engagement encounter sessions, waiting periods before marriage, restrictions on premarital cohabitation, mentoring by older couples both before and after marriage, and marriage encounters for couples to renew their relationships.

Since 1986, clergy in 63 cities have signed covenants to radically reduce the divorce rate in their communities. In seven of these cities, the divorce rate has dropped significantly. Modesto, California has seen its divorces fall by an encouraging 40 percent from 1986 to 1996.

Phillip Martin
Choctaw Indians

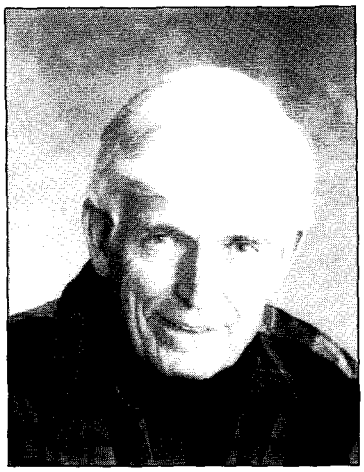
"Self-determination is the Choctaw way," says tribal chief Phillip Martin. A generation ago, that would have been news to most of his poverty-stricken tribe in rural Philadelphia, Mississippi.

In the era of government dependence before Martin was named chief, the unemployment rate for the Choctaw was a startling 75 percent. Eight of 10 Choctaws received welfare. Infant mortality and life expectancy rates were at Third World levels. Few Choctaws sought education past the eighth grade.

Today the Choctaw tribe is an economic powerhouse, thanks to Martin's tough-minded leadership and entrepreneurial savvy. When Martin took over the reins in 1979, his primary goal was to move his people off welfare and into jobs. That meant luring businesses into the depressed region. After approaching 500 firms, he finally convinced Packard Electric to build a plant in Choctaw country. Soon after a greeting-card company followed, and the economy of the reservation grew exponentially.

Today, the 6,100-member tribe runs a 42,000-square-foot industrial park, a construction firm, a hotel and casino, a printing plant, and a shopping center. The Choctaws have contracts with such corporations as Ford, Xerox, Navistar, and McDonald's, generating $300 million a year in revenue and making the Choctaw reservation one of the largest employers in the state of Mississippi. The annual incomes of Choctaw families have climbed from an average of $2,000 per year in the 1970s to $13,000 annually in 1996.

Says Martin, "Indians now see private enterprise as the best way out of poverty." Maybe it's time that bureaucrats in Washington realized they have something to learn from the Choctaws.



Patrick Rooney, founder of private scholarship program.

Phillip Martin, entrepreneur and Choctaw chief.

J. Patrick Rooney
Educational CHOICE Charitable Trust

Ten years ago, a white-haired businessman with a Huck Finn grin joined the mostly black Holy Angels Catholic Church in Indianapolis. There Patrick Rooney learned that most of the neighborhood's parents were unhappy with the discipline and academic standards of nearby public schools. Meanwhile, neighborhoods with awful public schools often had excellent religious schools just a few blocks away.

Rooney calls America's ailing schools a civil rights issue. "We have poor minority children sitting at the back of the bus in public schools," he says. "Even though there are better schools, the government won't let them go." Drawing from his own resources, Rooney established the Educational CHOICE Charitable Trust in 1991 to create a system of privately funded education vouchers. Its mission is to help poor parents get their kids out of public-school classrooms and into the private schools of their choice.

Within 10 days after the scholarships were announced, 750 students applied for 500 grants. Today about 2,100 grade-school students from low-income families receive tuition assistance in Indianapolis. Privately funded voucher programs based on Rooney's model have sprung up in at least 31 cities, benefiting more than 13,500 children, while another 40,000 fill a waiting list.

Rooney is also known for his development and advocacy of an increasingly popular form of alternative health insurance, the medical savings account (MSA). MSAs allow individuals to put money into a tax-free account to be used for health care, and roll it over from year to year. A pilot program for MSAs was passed by Congress and signed into law last year.

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Sister Connie Driscoll

St. Martin de Porres House of Hope

Sister Connie Driscoll is one tough nun. Though she thinks the statement in Scripture to "love thy neighbor" is more than a recommendation, Driscoll is no pushover when it comes to helping homeless women get back on their feet.

"People equate welfare with compassion," she says. "But compassion's got nothing to do with it. A handout is the least compassionate thing you could do." The House of Hope, which she founded 10 years ago in Chicago's Woodlawn neighborhood, is now recognized as one of the most effective programs of its kind in the country. The shelter has taken in and counseled almost 10,000 homeless, mostly drug-addicted mothers and their children.

Residents are subjected to a rigorous schedule: Wake-up is at 6:30 A.M. on weekday mornings and 7 A.M. on weekends. Women are assigned chores and must put aside 80 percent of their assistance money and 50 percent of their food stamps so that when they leave, they have a nest egg to set up their own place.

Driscoll makes no apologies for the rules and regimen she lays out for Hope's residents. And considering that only 4 to 5 percent of her residents ever return to the shelter system (according to Driscoll), no apologies are needed. Despite her rules, she says, women are beating down her doors to get in.

Driscoll refuses to take government money for her program because she thinks it would force her to become more bureaucratic. Moreover, she accomplishes her work on a meager $8.70 a day per resident, while other programs cost an average of $18.

Clint Bolick

Institute for Justice

Whether it's street vendors, unlicensed cabbies, or African hairbraiders, wherever a fight pits a little guy trying to earn an honest living against the regulatory arm of government, Clint Bolick is probably involved.

Clint Bolick

In 1980, fresh out of law school at the University of California at Davis, and living in Washington, D.C., Bolick ran into Ego Brown, a sidewalk bootblack. Bolick got more than a shine: Brown explained how city regulations made it next to impossible for him to run his business legally. Bolick took his case *pro bono* and thus launched a career of fighting government policies that prevent small entrepreneurs from flourishing.

In 1991, Bolick co-founded the Institute for Justice, a public-interest law firm, to continue his fight for economic opportunities for low-income people. Today, the Institute for Justice is at the forefront of some of America's hottest policy debates: the elimination of racial preferences in California, the promotion of school vouchers for inner-city children in Milwaukee and Cleveland, the termination of inter-racial barriers to adoption in Texas, and the protection of private jitney owners from efforts by public bus drivers to close them down in New York.

At 39, Bolick has written four books, including the recently published *The Affirmative Action Fraud: Can We Restore the American Civil Rights Vision?* and *Grassroots Tyranny: The Limits of Federalism.*

Victory Fellowship's Freddie Garcia.

Freddie Garcia

Victory Fellowship

"The man who has come back from the precipice can best show others the way." That's how President Bush once honored Freddie Garcia, a former drug addict and ex-con, now a Pentecostal pastor in San Antonio, Texas.

Garcia does indeed show others the way—in the most direct and personal terms. Determined to reach hard-core drug users and criminals, Garcia has literally opened his own home to addicts who want to break their addictions. Victory Fellowship claims to have rehabilitated 13,000 hard-core addicts and achieved a cure rate of 70 percent of the people who stick with their program for nine months. Today Garcia runs five houses on a paltry budget of $60,000 a year, all of which he raises from private donations.

For Garcia, faith is the critical catalyst for change. He sees addiction not as a disease but as a symptom of a larger problem: sin. And for that, Garcia preaches Jesus Christ as the solution. His counselors help addicts stay off drugs by praying with them, supporting them through the pain of coming clean, and reading Scripture. Victory Fellowship also trains street teams to bring other addicts along, telling them that they can "either repent now, or be visited in jail later."

Texas authorities have threatened to impose expensive regulations on the program and to shut Victory Fellowship down because its counselors are not certified by a state board. Garcia protests, "My people have educations you can't get at Yale University. I don't want no grants. I just want them to leave me alone."

***April Lassiter**, a Bradley Fellow at The Heritage Foundation, is the founder and president of the Initiative for Children. From 1993 to 1997, she was a policy adviser to Representative Tom DeLay, the House Majority Whip.*

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Are We Better Off?

An Index to Our Not-So-Civil Society

By Cherie S. Harder

In the last 20 years, there has been much talk about the speed and trajectory of societal change. Theses and tomes have been written, theories expounded, lies and damned lies propagated. To complete the picture—and in some cases, correct the story—we offer you statistics. Each of those below affords a small peek at the evolution of modern American life; taken together, they depict where society has advanced, stalemated and lost ground. Several trends emerge: Americans eat more, spend more, travel more, sue more and weigh more—a lot more. We possess more disposable income and household goods than ever, yet are far more likely to carry credit card debts and declare bankruptcy. Items unheard of in 1977—compact discs, personal computers, internet access, and VCRs—are now considered necessities. American "needs" and appetites have expanded with (and often outpace) our ability to pay for them.

Yet while the last 20 years have brought sizable material benefits to American adults, American children have lost ground. American children are more likely to be poor, to be victims of violent crime, to be born into broken homes, to be abused, and to lack a father's love, attention and presence. And while communications advances have opened up new and cheaper ways to keep in touch with loved ones (e-mail, deregulated telecommunications, et cetera), many of our most vital connections have broken down. The erosion of the strength of the institutions of family and marriage began before 1977, but having continued unimpeded for 20 years, has left the current generation of American children without the anchor and moorings of a stable family to an unprecedented degree.

The information below offers no policy prescriptions, only societal description. It seeks to shed some light on where we've been, and what ground we've covered. And since past choices hold future implications, it may also illuminate what we can expect in the years ahead.

Cherie S. Harder *is the deputy director of policy at Empower America.*

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1977		Now
EDUCATION • *Massive increases in education spending have failed to boost overall academic performance.*		
$313 bill.	Total education expenditures for all levels of education[1]	$523 bill.
$1,421	Education expenditures per capita[2]	$1,907
32.5 %	Percentage of high-school graduates 18 to 24 enrolled in college[3]	42 %
429	Average SAT scores of college-bound seniors[4]	428
93.1	Percentage of 9-year-old students at or above basic reading proficiency[5]	92.3
15-20,000	Number of students home-schooled[6]	1,226,000
FAMILIES • *Technology and changing sexual attitudes are altering the nature of family relationships.*		
0	Percentage of households with a VCR[7]	79 %
11.9 mill.	Number of cable television subscribers[8]	58 mill.
6.17	Average daily television viewing per household (in hours)[9]	7.28
15,532,000	Number of Americans living alone[10]	24,732,000
68.5 %	Percentage of men 25 and older who are married[11]	44.8 %
75.8 %	Percentage of women 25 and older who are married[12]	57.4 %
957,000	Number of American couples cohabitating[13]	3,668,000
957,000	Unmarried couple households with children[14]	3,500,000
51.7 %	Percentage of black out-of-wedlock births of all black births[15]	70.4 %
8.2 %	Percentage of white out-of-wedlock births of all white births[16]	25.4 %
47 %	Percentage of black children under 18 living in a two-parent family[17]	33 %
85 %	Percentage of white children under 18 living in a two-parent family[18]	76 %
838,000	Number of reported cases of child abuse and neglect[19]	2,900,000
1,316,000	Abortions per year[20]	1,400,000
5,173,400	Total abortions performed since *Roe v. Wade*[21]	35,273,792

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1977		Now
ECONOMY • *Inflation and unemployment are down, but taxation and litigation are up.*		
6.5 %	Inflation rate[22]	2.6 %
7.1 %	National unemployment rate[23]	5.4 %
April 30	Tax Freedom Day[24]	May 9
8.7 %	Percentage of the average American's income that goes towards payroll (social insurance) taxes[25]	10.4 %
$264 bill.	Total consumer credit debt[26]	$1.088 trill.
208,350	Number of bankruptcies filed[27]	1,178,555
$76 bill.	Total cost of the tort system[28]	$152 bill.
149,618	Number of civil lawsuits pending in the U.S.[29]	253,908
POLITICS • *Some of our most important institutions fail to inspire much confidence among most Americans.*		
	Percentage of Americans reporting a "great deal" or "quite a lot of confidence" in the institutions of[30]	
64 %	*The church or organized religion*	57 %
57 %	*The military*	66 %
46 %	*U.S. Supreme Court*	45 %
54 %	*Public schools*	38 %
33 %	*Big business*	24 %
39 %	*Organized labor*	25 %
353 to 181	Ratio of Democrats to Republicans in the House of Representatives	206 to 228
37 to 12	Ratio of Democratic to Republican governors[31]	17 to 32
36	State legislatures under Democratic control[32]	18
RELIGION & MORALITY • *Though most adhere to some religious faith, millions of Americans probably spend more time watching hard-core pornography than they do in church.*		
333,114	Total number of churches in the United States[33]	348,820
69 %	Percentage of Americans claiming to be a member of a church or synagogue[34]	67 %
58 %	Percentage of Americans who claim their religious beliefs are "very important" in their life[35]	61 %
0	Hard-core porn video rentals[36]	665,000,000
less than 100	Newly-released hard-core porn feature films/videos[37]	8,000

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1977		Now
CRIME • *America still leads the industrialized world in violent crime.*		
18,033	Total number of murders[38]	22,076
485,078	Total number of aggravated assaults[39]	1,036,553
8.5 %	Percentage of murders committed by children under 18[40]	16.4 %
285,456	Prison population[41]	1,016,760
268	Number of prisoners in custody per 1,000 violent crimes committed[42]	511
1	Number of prisoners executed[43]	31
HEALTH • *Americans are more likely to carry a sexually transmitted disease and 30 extra pounds.*		
73.2	Life expectancy at birth (years)[44]	76.3
$746	U.S. spending on health care per capita[45]	$3,510
8.4 %	U.S. spending on health care as percentage of GDP[46]	13.7 %
25.4 %	Percentage of adult Americans who are obese[47]	33.3 %
65,000	Reported cases of syphillis[48]	82,000
0	Reported cases of AIDS[49]	78,279

1. Congressional Research Service (CRS), "Federal Education Funding 1996 Perspective" (1977, 1996). Figures in constant 1995 dollars.
2. CRS (1977, 1994). Figures in constant 1995 dollars.
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4. See above (1977, 1994).
5. *Digest of Education Statistics 1996*, National Center for Education Statistics (1975, 1992).
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13. Census Bureau, *Fertility and Family Research* (1977, 1995).
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15. National Center for Health Statistics, "Final Natality Statistics" (1977, 1994).
16. See above (1977, 1994).
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20. National Right to Life (1977, 1996).
21. National Right to Life, based on Alan Guttmacher Institute Data (1977, 1996).
22. "Economic Report to the President 1997" (1977, 1997). Projections for 1997 by WEFA Group.
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24. Tax Foundation (1977, 1997).
25. See above (1977, 1997).
26. Federal Reserve Board, "Economic Report of the President 1996" (1977, 1995).
27. Administrative Office of U.S. Courts (1977, 1996).
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29. U.S. District Courts (1977, 1996).
30. "Gallup Poll Monthly, No. 313," printed in *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1995* (1977, 1996).
31. National Governor's Association (1977, 1997).
32. *Statistical Abstract* (1977, 1995).
33. National Council of Churches (1977, 1990). Includes Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Buddhist, Orthodox and Unitarian denominations; does not include Muslims.
34. See above (1977, 1997).
35. Gallup/Princeton Religious Research Center (1976-7, 1997).
36. *Adult Video News*, as reported in *U.S. News & World Report*, Feb. 10, 1997 (1977, 1996).
37. See above (1977, 1996).
38. *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1995* (includes nonnegligent manslaughters) (1997, 1994).
39. See above (1977, 1994).
40. See above (1977, 1994).
41. *Statistical Abstract* (1977, 1994).
42. *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1995* (1977, 1994).
43. See above (1977, 1994).
44. National Center for Health Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States 1996.* (1977, 1995). Figure for 1995 projected.
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47. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) (1977, 1996).
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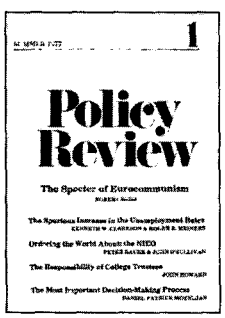

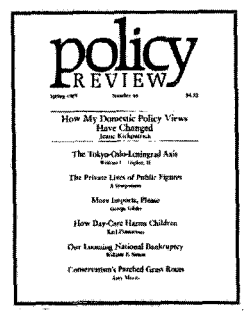
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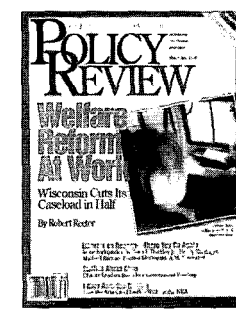

Williams on Minimum Wage

The racial effect of the minimum wage law would exist in the absence of racial preferences on the behalf of employers. The minimum wage law gives firms effective economic incentive to seek to hire only the most productive employees which means that firms are less willing to hire and/or train the least productive employees, which includes teenagers and particularly minority teenagers. But holding all else constant, such as worker productivity, the minimum wage law gives firms incentive to indulge whatever racial preferences that they may hold. The reason is that the minimum wage law prevents the worker or job-seeker from offering a compensating difference.

—Walter E. Williams, "Government Sanctioned Restraints That Reduce Economic Opportunities for Minorities" (Fall 1977)

Friedman on Taxes

By concentrating on the wrong thing, the deficit, instead of the right things, total government spending, fiscal conservatives have been the unwitting handmaidens of the big spenders. The typical historical process is that the spenders put through laws which increase government spending and say, "My God, that's terrible; we have got to do something about that deficit." So they cooperate with the big spenders in getting taxes imposed. As soon as the new taxes are imposed and passed, the big spenders are off again, and then there is another burst in government spending and another deficit.

—Milton Friedman, "The Limitations of Tax Limitation" (Summer 1978)

Schlafly on the ERA

Just as the identical reinforcement clauses of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments have transferred from the states to the federal government the enforcement and pre-emption power over the subject matter of Section 1 of those amendments, Section 2 of the federal ERA would likewise transfer from the states to the federal government the enforce-

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ment and preemption power over the subject matter of Section 1 of ERA, namely, all state laws that have traditionally made distinctions based on sex. This would include laws governing marriage, divorce, child custody, family property, inheritance, widow's privileges, homosexual activity, abortion, prison regulations, insurance rates, and private schools.

—Phyllis Schlafly, "The Effect of Equal Rights Amendments in State Constitutions" (Summer 1979)

Gilder on Welfare

In the welfare culture, money becomes not something earned by men through hard work, but a right conferred on women by the state. Protest and complaint replace diligence and discipline as the sources of pay. Boys grow up seeking support from women, while they find manhood in the macho circles of the street and the bar, or in the irresponsible fathering of random progeny.

—George Gilder, "The Coming Welfare Crisis" (Winter 1980)

Sowell on Poverty

We should distinguish the poor, as we conceive of them, from the poor as they appear in our statistics and in our laws. With a sufficiently narrow definition of income, the statistical "poor" might include, for example, a Kennedy or a Rockefeller who happened not to be working this year. (One of the advantages of having wealth is that you do not have to work, or work as hard, or seek out jobs that pay you the highest income.) Students who graduate by the millions each June only earn half as much that year as they would normally earn. Therefore, their income may fall into the poverty level, even though they are not poor in any meaningful sense.

—Thomas Sowell, "Thoughts and Details on Poverty" (Summer 1981)

Privatizing the Environment

Why do people litter public parks and streets, but not their own yards? Why do cattle and sheep ranchers overgraze the public grazing lands, but maintain lush pastures on their own property? Why are the national forests so carelessly logged and overharvested, while private forests are carefully managed, cut on a sustained-yield basis, and reforested with "super trees" grown on costly nursery tree farms?

—Robert J. Smith, "Privatizing the Environment" (Spring 1982)

The Reagan Boom

America in the throes of a supply-side recovery created more jobs in 1983 than Canada has created since 1965, four times as many jobs as the British economy generated between 1950 and 1982, and as many jobs as Japan created in the entire decade of the 1970s.

—Grover G. Norquist, "Four Million New Jobs" (Spring 1984)

Meyerson on Hiroshima

Yankee troops were scheduled to land on Kyushu in November 1945, and on the central island of Honshu the following March. There can be no doubt that the battles would have been more destructive than the devastation at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. General Marshall predicted a quarter of a million to a million American casualties, with as many or more Japanese deaths. And the experience of other great battles in 1945 made it clear that civilians would bear the brunt of the violence. A hundred thousand Filipino civilians perished along with 16,000 Japanese occupation troops in the defense of Manila, and the city itself suffered greater destruction than any Allied metropolis except Warsaw. The last-ditch defense of Okinawa took the lives of between 40,000 and 70,000 Okinawan civilians, many committing *hara-kiri* rather than be conquered by the foreign devils.

—Adam Meyerson, "Atoms for Peace: Truman Was Right To Drop the Bomb" (Summer 1985)

D'Souza on Bishops

Interviews with these bishops suggest that they know little or nothing about the ideas and proposals to which they are putting their signature and lending their religious authority. The bishops are unfamiliar with existing defense and economic programs, unable to identify even in general terms the Soviet military capability, ignorant of roughly how much of the budget currently goes to defense, unclear about how much should be reallocated to social programs, and innocent of the most basic concepts underlying the intelligent layman's discussion of these questions.

—Dinesh D'Souza, "The Bishops as Pawns" (Fall 1985)

Du Pont on Protectionism

Imports do not cost jobs; they are a reflection of the relative strength of the American economy. We are growing faster than the rest of the world because we cut taxes in 1981 and because we began to deregulate our economy. Continued job creation requires that we continue on this path.

—Pete du Pont, "The Kamikaze Economics of Protectionism" (Fall 1985)

Savimbi on Freedom Fighting

We ask also for your political and diplomatic

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support. We need you to insist at the United Nations and other international forums that the Cubans and Soviets leave Angola and that the promised elections be held. With your military and political support, other nations will follow your lead and give us aid. Do not underestimate the importance of your decision. For Angola is the Munich of Africa. Hesitation, the refusal to aid UNITA in its fight against the Cubans and Soviets, will be taken as a signal by all the countries in the region that the United States has abandoned them to the Soviets as the West abandoned Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe to Hitler in 1938. Do not suppose that Zaire, Zambia, Botswana, and Namibia will remain of the West when faced with an unopposed base in Angola. They will be forced to make their political accommodations with the Soviets just as most of Eastern Europe fell under Nazi political domination without a shot being fired. The loss of the sea route around the Cape and the loss of the strategic minerals found in central and southern Africa would be a crippling blow to the economy and defense of the West. That is why I say that UNITA is the key to Angola, Angola is the key to Africa, and Africa is the key to the West.

—Jonas Savimbi, "The War Against Soviet Colonialism" (Winter 1986)

Zinsmeister on Day Care

The deepest problems with paid child-rearing is that someone is being asked to do for money what very few of us are able to do for any reason other than love. Competent and safe baby-sitting, that is not so hard to hire. What will always be difficult is finding people who feel such affinity with the child that they will go out of their way to do the tiny precious things that make children thrive—giving a reason why rather than just saying no, rewarding a small triumph with a joyful expression, risking a tantrum to correct a small habit that could be overlooked but would be better resolved, showering unqualified devotion.

—Karl Zinsmeister, "Brave New World" (Spring 1988)

Job Training at Its Best

As the archetypal fast-food establishment, serving close to 7 percent of the U.S. population every day and employing a remarkable one out of 15 first-time job seekers, McDonald's has been a frequent target for those expounding the "dead-end jobs" thesis.

While the typical complaints critics voice about McDonald's certainly have some basis in reality . . . a surprising number of burger flippers advance through the ranks and enjoy the benefits that go with managerial responsibility in a demanding business. More important, most employees who pass through McDonald's gain the kinds of skills that help them get better jobs. Far from sticking its workers in an inescapable rut, McDonald's functions as a *de facto* job training program by teaching the basics of *how* to work.

—Ben Wildavsky, "McJobs" (Summer 1989)

Saving the Elephant

The expansion of southern African elephant herds suggests that proponents of a global ban on ivory trade are asking the wrong question. They ask, "How do we stop the ivory trade in order to remove the incentive for poaching?" They should ask, "How do we make elephants valuable enough that people have an incentive to be careful stewards rather than careless exterminators?"

—Randy T. Simmons and Urs P. Kreuter, "Herd Mentality" (Fall 1989)

Olasky on Compassion

The crisis of the modern welfare state is not just a crisis of government. Too many private charities dispense aid indiscriminately—ignoring the moral and spiritual needs of the poor, and in so doing, treating them more as animals than as people. The government of a pluralistic society is inherently incapable of tending to these spiritual needs, so the more effective provision of social services will ultimately depend on their return to private and especially to religious institutions. We need to make sure that our alternative points of light provide light and not just another shade of darkness. The century-old question—does any given "scheme of help . . . make great demands on men to give themselves to their brethren?"—is still the right one to ask. Most of our 20th-century schemes have failed. It's time to learn from the warm hearts and hard heads of the 19th.

—Marvin Olasky, "Beyond the Stingy Welfare State" (Fall 1990)

Armey on Farm Socialism

The Department of Agriculture has paid dairy farmers to kill 1.6 million cows and take five-year vacations from farming. It has enforced regulations that have led to the squandering of 3 billion oranges, 2 billion lemons, and hundreds of millions of pounds of nuts and raisins. It has rewarded crop farmers for leaving idle 61 million acres of farmland—an area equal to all the territory of Ohio and Indiana, and half of Illinois. For these dubious contributions to American competitiveness, the USDA has charged the taxpayers about $20 billion a year and forced consumers to pay $10 billion a year in higher food costs. Today, farm programs are so generous and distort markets so severely that

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even the most self-reliant farmer has little choice but to sign up.

—Rep. Dick Armey, "Moscow on the Mississippi" (Winter 1990)

Mattox on Family Time

Contrary to the assertions of professional children's advocates in Washington, the number one problem facing American children today is not lack of subsidized day-care centers, nutrition programs, or after-school care for "latchkey" kids. It's not even economic poverty, although 20 percent of American children live below the official poverty line. The biggest problem facing American children is a deficit of another kind—a deficit that is at least as serious as the budget or trade deficits. The biggest problem facing American children today is a lack of time with and attention from their parents.

—William R. Mattox Jr., "The Parent Trap" (Winter 1991)

Feulner on Conservatism

Conservatism is going to have to involve coalitions between people who don't always agree with each other if it is going to be a broader-based movement and become a governing majority for the future. You don't build a majority by writing off a large chunk of individuals who ought to be part of your movement. Successful politics consists of addition and multiplication, not subtraction and division.

—Edwin J. Feulner Jr., "Building the New Establishment" (Fall 1991)

Ralph Reed's Strategy

The most urgent challenge for pro-family conservatives is to develop a broader issues agenda. The pro-family movement has limited its effectiveness by concentrating disproportionately on issues such as abortion and homosexuality. These are vital moral issues, and must remain an important part of the message. To win at the ballot box and in the court of public opinion, however, the pro-family movement must speak to the concerns of average voters in the areas of taxes, crime, government waste, health care, and financial security.

—Ralph Reed Jr., "Casting A Wider Net" (Summer 1993)

Bartlett's Missing Quotations

The 16th edition of *Bartlett's Quotations*, published in late 1992, contains only three entries from Ronald Reagan, the same number as from Zachary Taylor and Gerald Ford. By comparison, there are 28 entries from John F. Kennedy and 35 from Franklin Roosevelt. Jimmy Carter, hardly remembered for his eloquence, has twice as many entries as the president who was called, even by his enemies, the "Great Communicator." Jonathan Siegel, co-editor of the Macmillan Book of Political Quotations, calls the political bias in the latest *Bartlett's* "an insult to the memory of John Bartlett and the ideologically inclusive spirit of the first 15 editions."

—Adam Meyerson, "Mr. Kaplan, Tear Down This Wall: Bartlett's Missing Quotations" (Fall 1993)

The Resiliency of Capitalism

Today, six years after the last car rolled off the line, Kenosha has gone from bust to boomtown: Unemployment has been halved, per capita income is up, and new housing starts have soared. This community has become a testament to the resiliency of market capitalism, traditional values, and conservative economic policies. While the Left tried to interfere in the market to prop up an inefficient plant, their failure—and the community's subsequent success—demonstrates the resilience of a conservative economy.

—Stephen Glass, "Yes We Kenosha" (Fall 1994)

Bennett on Godlessness

One will often hear that religious faith is a private matter that does not belong in the public arena. But this analysis does not hold—at least on some important points. Whatever your faith—or even if you have none at all—it is a fact that when millions of people stop believing in God, or when their belief is so attenuated as to be belief in name only, enormous public consequences follow. And when this is accompanied by an aversion to spiritual language by the political and intellectual class, the public consequences are even greater. . . . Dostoyevsky reminded us in Brothers Karamazov that "if God does not exist, everything is permissible." We are now seeing "everything."

—William J. Bennett, "Revolt Against God" (Winter 1994)

Craig on Foster Care

What was for most of America's history an entirely private endeavor has become a massive, inefficient government system. State agencies consistently fail to recruit enough families for the children eligible for adoption every year; potential parents often are turned down because of racial considerations, or turned off by protracted and unnecessary waiting periods; cumbersome state regulations extend to private adoption agencies and can even prohibit private attorneys from handling adoptions. The result is that tens of thousands of children are now free to be adopted but have nowhere to go.

—Conna Craig, "What I Need is a Mom" (Summer 1995)

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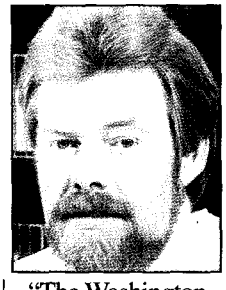

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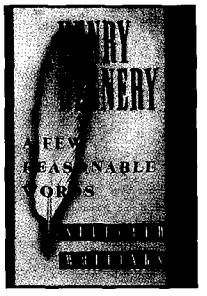

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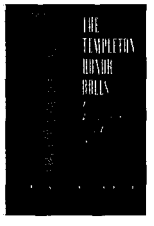

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